BALDWIN.



A SERIO-COMIC TALE.

Printed by J. Darling, Leadenhall-street, London.

BALDWIN;

OR,

A MISER'S HEIR.

A Serio-comic Tale.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

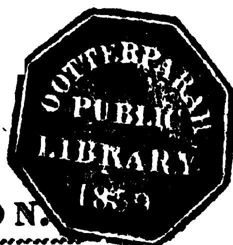
BY

AN OLD BACHELOR.

I have enough;
To the trunk again, and shut the spring of it.
SHAKESPEARE.

VOL. I.

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DEDICATION.

TO

ANYBODY.

MY DEAR SIR,

IN submitting the following pages to your inspection, though perhaps little calculated for your entertainment, and certainly never intended for your perusal, I shall offer but little preface, and less apology. The subject of them is not so intricate or obscure as to require the one, and you will, I hope, excuse me if I say, I do not conceive you have any right to demand the other.

One of three motives is usually assigned,

or implied, for committing the lucubrations of an author to the press; the desire of fame—the hope of profit—or, lastly, and perhaps most frequently pleaded, the advice and importunity of friends. Γνωθι σεαυτον is a precept not less easy in theory than difficult in execution; but if I do *know myself*—if I am at all conscious of the real nature of the incitement which urges me to lay these sheets before you, it does not arise from either of the above-mentioned stimulants.

A thirst after fame can hardly be supposed to influence one who, cautiously concealing his patronymic appellation, means to tell you no more of himself, than that he was fortunate enough to receive from his gossips at the font the sponsorial and sonorous designation of George Hector Epaminondas; and that, through the courtesy

courtesy of the world, he is habituated to affix the magical characters E, S, Q, to his name; a piece of information extorted solely by the dread of being confounded with the herd of plebeian scribblers, whose (of course) miserable productions it would be very *mauvais ton* for any lady or gentleman of sentiment and fashion in these days to cast a second glance on, while the fascinating duodecimos of such elegant votaries of Phœbus, as captain A——, or my lord B——, sir J—— C——, or lady M——, are courting their regards, and contending for their attention.

Still less is the expectation of profit my inducement; an advantage in itself uncertain, and which, should any accrue, is already mentally dedicated to the furtherance of a purpose from which I shall receive no personal benefit. At this asser-

tion, methinks, sir, I see you shake your head and smile. Be it so; it is nevertheless the fact.

Least of all, am I actuated by the wishes or interference of my friends; not even to you, sir, whatever may have been the favours I have received, or the obligations I have incurred (and they have both been numerous), not even to you, sir, have I ventured to communicate my intention, or confide its result; it is unnecessary, therefore, to state that any censure or disgrace this rash attempt at authorship may draw down on my unfortunate head, is not to be attributed to the indiscreet zeal and blind partiality of my friends.

Having thus unequivocally told you what are *not* my motives, you may think it right, perhaps, that I should be equally explicit in declaring what they *are*.

I shall

I shall not be guilty of the uncourtly vulgarism of telling you, "That is no business of yours," as I am anxious to bespeak your interest, and secure your favour; but I do assure you candidly, that I am scarcely conscious of them myself. In the mean time, the performance, such as it is, is before you. I do not presume to tread in the footsteps of the "mighty magician of Udolpho," still less in those of that no less eminent and exalted character, the bare-breeched Dominie of Gandersdeugh; but if, Sir, I can occasionally interest your feelings, or excite a smile upon your countenance, your purpose in reading, and mine in writing, will both be answered.

Should this, my first offence, be considered as calling for severe reprehension, I promise, with all the sincerity of an erring,

but well-disposed Tyro, to "be a good boy, and do so no more." If, on the contrary, you should be induced to smile on what has constituted the amusement of my leisure hours—if, through the approbation and patronage of Anybody, these columns should get into the hands of Everybody, and Somebody should in consequence call for a second edition, Nobody would be so much gratified, as,

SIR,

Your most obedient,

Most faithful,

And devoted humble servant,

G. H. E.

BALDWIN.

CHAPTER I.

————Who calls so loud?

. . . .

————Things that love night
Love not such nights as these; the wrathful skies
Gallow the very wanderers of the dark,
And make them keep their caves; since I was man,
Such groans of roaring wind and rain I never
Remember to have heard; man's nature cannot carry
The affliction nor the force. SHAKESPEARE.

A FINE frosty morning was succeeding one of the most tempestuous nights which the Englishman's "hanging month" (as it is termed by our volatile neighbours across the Channel) ever produced, when the in-

 habitants

habitants of a small tenement in one of the maritime counties of Great Britain were suddenly aroused from the embraces of Morpheus (a gentleman, by the way, whose name, it is more than probable, not one of the said inhabitants had ever heard of) by a loud and violent knocking, occasioned by the repeated application of the heel of a ploughman's boot-shoe, pretty thickly studded with iron, to the knocker-less portal of the before-mentioned edifice, which its proprietor, a wealthy brewer in a neighbouring town, had most pseudonymously dignified with the name of inn.

Now it had so happened, that a club, composed of many of the surrounding farmers, had met the evening before, to celebrate their weekly orgies, in the room which their courtesy denominated a parlour; and although the fury of the elements had occasioned a thinner meeting than usual, the same cause probably had induced those hardier worthies whom the state of the weather had failed to daunt,

to fortify their stomachs with a few additional draughts; so that no material diminution had taken place in the consumption of the accustomed quantity of punch. Indeed, on this as well as on many previous occasions, the worthy occupier and landlord, Mr. William Clincher, actuated, no doubt, by a strong sense of propriety, and thinking it his duty to prevent, as far as in him lay, any alarming defalcation in the article alluded to, had not only assisted their endeavours, by sundry sippings and tastings of that seducing fluid in the kitchen, before its introduction to the company at large, but had also availed himself of a very slight intimation to extend his valuable services to the parlour also; and as he was in the habit of favouring that jovial society which it contained, with "The Squire's Neck-or-nothing, and that was a Grey," in a sufficiently-exalted, if not very harmonious, tone of voice, his presence was considered rather a desirable acquisition than the contrary, more espe-

cially, as in addition to his other qualifications, he was an excellent *listener*, and was never known to exhibit the slightest symptoms of weariness or ennui at the longest history of the remarkable hard frost which happened when Mr. Proser was a boy, or the more facetious, but no less anodyne legend, of how Dr. Drowsy's "uncle Jackson served the exciseman."

It was, however, no part of Mr. Clincher's system of politics, to suffer the glass to stand idle, or, to use his own constant expression, to "let the punch get cold;" and he had, in consequence, on the ever-memorable evening in question, so far accelerated its circulation, as well by precept as example, that on the breaking up of the party, after having for some minutes impeded Mr. Aftergrass, the churchwarden, in putting on his surtout, through his zealous endeavours to assist him; and having, with difficulty, succeeded in lighting him to the door, he left the task of bolting and locking up to the wife of his bosom,

bosom, and retired solus to the nuptial couch, without obtaining, or indeed soliciting, the slightest assistance from his gentle helpmate; well knowing, perhaps, that any requisition of the kind would have been treated with the most consummate disdain, that tender-hearted matron having, not unfrequently, on similar occasions, condescended to inform him, not in the most conciliating way imaginable, that he was a nasty intoxicated wretch, and might sleep with the pigs for any thing she cared.

This was the interesting pair whose rosy slumbers were prematurely disturbed by the united vocal, manual, and pedestrious efforts of Stephen Whitehead, who had, for the last three years, officiated as occasional ploughman and groom in ordinary to the worshipful churchwarden already recorded.

Some minutes elapsed ere the perseverance of the impatient rustic was crowned with its merited success; the applications

of the right elbow of the more vigilant Mrs. Clincher to the opposite ribs of her nominal lord and master having for once failed of their usual success, though certainly not exercised with less energy, from the circumstance of its being considerably earlier than the accustomed period of its matutinal labours; on the contrary, a strong sympathetic effect appeared to be produced by the mode adopted to procure admission, the arm and heel of the lady falling at length in exact time with the measure elicited by the more muscular limbs of the sturdy ploughman without.—"Why, Clincher! Clincher, I say! get out, Bill Clincher, and see what is the matter, you drunken beast! The house may be on fire for what you care, and we may all be burnt in our beds!"

His senses thus doubly assailed, Mr. Clincher at length, with infinite reluctance, extended to their utmost stretch a pair of large unmeaning eyes, bearing, both in size and hue, no slight resemblance

blance to a couple of boiled gooseberries, and proceeded, his teeth chattering with cold, to dislodge the only window-fastening, a broken fork, long since appropriated to that service, from its situation, and opening the casement, protruded a long scraggy neck, and a face, the colour of which it would have been difficult, at that early period of the dawn, to distinguish from the scarlet worsted nightcap which surmounted it, so as to discern the precise boundary line which, without any land debateable, separated the one from the other.

"For Heaven's sake, Master Clincher," cried the voice of the applicant from below, "make haste down, and light a fire, and get something warm and comfortable like; here be Jack Simmons and I ha found a poor wretch in Hawkins' Wood, almost covered with the snow, and mortal stiff to be sure; Jack be run across to the cottage at the wood-side, to get somebody to help bring un here, and I ha started off afore,

afore, to give ye notice, and get things ready like; so jump about, wool ye that's a good soul, and bring down the brandy bottle; it is *tedious* cold, and I should like a sup o' brandy mysel."

Masterly and elaborate as this harangue undoubtedly was, like many other elaborate harangues, it contained in itself the seeds of its own discomfiture: by a singular infelicity, the two words which operated most forcibly on the sensorium of the auditor, were precisely those least calculated to produce an impression favourable to the petition of the orator. The term, "poor wretch," was, perhaps, of all others in the language, the one to which Mr. Clincher had the most decided and insuperable aversion; and it is probable that the angry ejaculation, fast rising to his lips, would have been succeeded by the immediate replacing of the fork, and utter occlusion both of the advocate and his *protégé*. Fortunately, however, for the cause of humanity, before the embryo malediction

tion could burst in thunder on the head of its destined and defenceless victim, the arrival of a second courier from Hawkins' Wood, with the intelligence, that some peasants were at hand, with "old Mr. Baldwin, who had been lost in the snow," caused a sort of antiperistaltic motion in the sentiments of the now-sympathizing publican, completely reversing the former course of his ideas, and rendering him as eager now for the reception of the unfortunate sufferer, as he had before been averse to that necessary measure.

This sudden revulsion of opinion, it is possible, might have been occasioned by the consideration that Mr. Baldwin was a neighbour, though not a near one, and one whom, of course, as such, it was his duty, as a Christian, to succour to the extent of his ability, since it would be uncharitable to attribute any weight to the totally-irrelevant circumstance, that his expected guest had somehow or other acquired the

reputation

reputation of being one of the wealthiest inhabitants of that part of the country.

Whatever might be the motive the fact is unquestionable, that, committing the flapping casement to its own guidance, regardless of the shrill-toned remonstrances vociferated by his better half, who probably now found "the winds of heaven visit her face too roughly," our thoroughly-awakened host proceeded to accoutre his outward man with a degree of dispatch which would have done honour to the illustrious Agamemnon, king of men, himself; and if he were inferior to that gallant commander in the regularity with which he arranged his habiliments, as described by the great father of poetry with such laudable exactness (truth compelling us to confess that he confined the arrayment of his person to the slipping on that part of his dress which (with the greatest reluctance we venture to allude to, and dare by no means attempt to describe), he nevertheless

theless made up in celerity what was deficient in method; and leaving his affectionate helpmate to adorn herself at her leisure, was in a few seconds busily employed in raking together the scarce-extinguished embers of the kitchen fire, having previously admitted Stephen and his companion, in order to the gratification of his curiosity as to the extraordinary circumstance which had disturbed his repose. But as Mr. Whitehead's narrative, especially that part of it which accounted for his being so early abroad, was sufficiently obscure, and adorned with various episodes, containing the substance of what he said to Jack, and what the no-less-communicative Jack replied to him, we shall, to save the reader's time, relate briefly the matter as it really occurred.

The fact then was, that these two worthy votaries of Ceres subjoined to their daily and avowed vocations of husbandmen, the more private and nocturnal employment of purveyors of game to an emi-

nent

nent poulterer in the town of Appleton, which we have already stated to have been at no great distance from the village of Mayfield, which comprises our present scene of action.

In the pursuit of the latter calling, the morning being an uncommonly-fine one (fine, reader, is a relative term, and the ground being everywhere covered with snow, this was a remarkably-fine one for their purpose), they had issued forth at a rather earlier hour than usual, endeavouring to trace the footsteps of a certain noxious animal, called a hare, several of which were in the constant habit of barking sundry trees, and otherwise doing considerable damage to the young plantations of their master, as well as to those of many of his neighbours. Although they certainly had no absolute injunctions to that effect, yet recollecting, probably, that it is the peculiar characteristic of a good servant never to need bidding to do any thing, and desirous moreover of putting an effectual stop

to

to the serious evil which the nightly depredations of these robbers occasioned to society in general, they had proceeded, in the excess of their philanthropy, to the skirts of Hawkins' Wood, a cover of considerable extent, near the entrance of which, and at no great distance from a footpath which ran through it, their progress was arrested by the sight of a human body, nearly enveloped in the snow, which seemed to have fallen long and thickly, subsequent to the accident or weakness which had caused its situation.

It is but justice to the men to add, that all thoughts of poaching were immediately suspended: after endeavouring in vain to ascertain if any sparks of life were yet remaining, they had flown with all the speed a desire of preserving the life of a fellow-creature could inspire, in the different directions already mentioned; and it was not till the return of Simmons, with the cottager, to the body, that it was recognised as that of Mr. Baldwin, an elderly gentle-

man,

man, who had for some years led the life of a recluse, in a small and lonely house, situated on the borders of a romantic little stream, which wound through a secluded valley, at the distance of about a mile from the spot where this ill-fated person had to all appearance breathed his last.

The sun's first beams shone brightly on the snow-crowned summit of the sign of the Royal Oak, and disclosed to the eye of the passing traveller an excellent likeness of the royal fugitive, who, enveloped in a full-bottomed periwig, very little larger than the tree which shelters him, is seen emerging from its branches, and viewing, with the most philosophic indifference, two gentlemen on horseback below, in the costume of dragoons, with long swords in their hands, and enormous three-cornered hats, represented as in actual pursuit of that august personage, who, from some strange obliquity of their visual orbs, so miraculously escapes their observation, when the procession, bearing the unfortunate man, extended

extended on a hurdle, drew near, and at length deposited the unconscious burthen on a large table, in the inner room, while, nearly at the same moment, Mr. Jordan, a member of the faculty, whose skill in the three branches of the profession remained unrivalled and unquestioned in the village of Mayfield and its vicinity, walked majestically into the assembly.

The arrival of this learned practitioner at this precise juncture was extremely opportune: he had received a summons, about two hours before, to attend the crying-out of the wife of a labourer in the neighbourhood; and having succeeded in introducing a fine boy to the notice of his seven expecting little brothers and sisters, was urging an old grey poney to the top of his speed (a very moderate canter), with the hope and intention of yet enjoying a comfortable nap before breakfast, when, attracted by the confusion of voices proceeding from the public-house, and the singularity of its being open at so early an hour, he

he rode up to the door, immediately alighting, when informed of the accident which had occurred, to offer his professional services. Drawing off his gloves, and ordering all to quit the room, except the landlord and his wife, with a few others whose assistance might be useful, he prepared to examine the patient; and after the customary application to the wrist, and a critical survey of the body, pronounced, with a solemnity of visage which an owl might have envied, "the principle of vitality to be either suspended or extinct."

In order, therefore, to ascertain whether it was or was not in the power of medicine to restore animation, he caused the body to be stripped, and placed between two blankets, giving various other directions in the furtherance of this benevolent intention; every effort, however, proved ineffectual; and after the lapse of a considerable period of time, Mr. (or, as he was invariably styled by the villagers, doctor) Jordan was reluctantly compelled to admit that

that this was one of those cases which set chemicals and galenicals at defiance, the patient being neither more nor less than absolutely and irrecoverably defunct. He accordingly recommended Mr. Clincher, whose countenance had visibly increased in longitude when the decision was announced, to take proper measures for informing the friends of the deceased, as well as the inmates of his habitation, of the fatal occurrence which had taken place, adding, that, of course, an inquest must be held at the Royal Oak.

This latter remark tended a little to dissipate the clouds which chagrin had begun to scatter over the rosy features of the landlord; but in executing the first part of the commission, a difficulty arose, which had not been foreseen either by mine host or the doctor. To whom were they to apply? Mr. Baldwin had, it was notorious, long since inhabited a small house, which he rented at a low rate of a gentleman residing in the town of Appleton; although

unquestionably

unquestionably possessed of considerable property, which several circumstances had combined to indicate, his habits and manner of living had been penurious in the extreme. One old man alone was the fellow-inmate of his dwelling, whose daily task it was to make his master's bed, arrange and light a few sticks, when cold compelled him to allow himself the luxury of a fire, and dress the coarse and scanty fare which supported him. This latter article was invariably purchased and brought home by himself; and while in quality it was no way superior to the food of the meanest labourer, so also in quantity it was lamentably deficient. His clothes were of the most ordinary kind, not unfrequently variegated with patches whose colour bore little resemblance to that of the original suit: yet notwithstanding this, and a method he had contracted of stooping in his gait, while his eye, rarely lifted to the parallel of the horizon, was incessantly revolving from side to side, with

with an air of restlessness and undefined suspicion; still, like my uncle Toby, "Nature had written gentleman so legibly upon his brow," that the surrounding peasantry seldom failed to step aside from the footway to give him the pass, and touch their hats to the "old miser," a name by which he was much more frequently designated than by any other appellation whatsoever. Three persons only had been known to visit him in his retreat; a lad, who had at one period resided in his house, and who was generally supposed to be his son; Mr. Beresford, the proprietor of his cottage; and an attorney from Appleton, who had, in one or two instances, assisted him in his professional capacity.

After mature deliberation, therefore, it was at length determined, that the news of the decease of his tenant should forthwith be conveyed to Mr. Beresford, Jordan himself kindly volunteering the service, as that gentleman resided but a few

 doors

doors distant from the doctor's medical emporium.

Rumour, with her hundred tongues, had however contrived to abridge the labours of the learned disciple of Hippocrates, by previously conveying to the ears of the person he designed to call upon some intelligence of the catastrophe of the night, who, in consequence, presented himself to the view of his intended visitor about half-way between the Royal Oak and the place of his destination.

Reining in his horse the moment he approached Mr. Jordan, he received, in answer to his earnest inquiries, a full confirmation of the melancholy fact, delivered with all due technicality, and in terms so much more circumstantial than his impatience could brook, that cutting short his informant's discourse, he abruptly demanded whether the body still remained in the house in which it was originally deposited?

Having

Having replied in the affirmative, the erudite votary of Æsculapius resumed the broken thread of his oration, and proceeded to assure him—"That when the blood is immoderately cooled or condensed, as in these cases of congelation, the corpuscular attraction prevailing over the expansive force, the serum becomes over-thinned and diluted, and is consequently separated too fast, when being thrown off too plentifully on the glands and lymphatics, the consequence, my dear sir, is, that——" But here the exposition ceased abruptly, the expounder perceiving that his auditor, whose politeness and attachment to learning, he, in his own mind, determined to be about upon a par, had left him to deduce effects from causes by himself, and was rapidly advancing at a pretty smart gallop to the abandoned theatre of his late scientific experiments.

Unwilling therefore to cast away his eloquence, and "waste his learning on the desert air," he gave a gentle intima-

tion to his four-footed companion to accelerate his pace, and proceeded on to Appleton, inwardly lamenting the degeneracy of the age, and its growing indifference to the abstruser studies and the depths of philosophical research.

CHAP-

CHAPTER II.

——————Sordidus ut se
Non unquam servo melius vestiret; ad usque
Supremum tempus ne se penuria victus
Opprimeret, metuebat. HORACE.

. . . .

——————So sordid grown,
His very servant's garb excell'd his own;
While, to the last, by avarice render'd blind,
Mean fears of poverty oppress'd his mind. *Anon.*

WHEN Mr. Beresford arrived at the Royal Oak, throwing the reins upon his horse's neck, he leaped from the saddle, and demanded, with much impatience, of the disappointed Clincher, who would willingly have favoured him with his edition of the history of Mr. Baldwin's misfortune, to be immediately conducted to the room which contained the remains of his unfor-

 tunate

tunate tenant, or, as he styled him, friend, expressing his anxiety to satisfy himself by actual inspection, if there were indeed no hopes of reanimating the vital flame. The landlord accordingly, with a shake of the head, which expressed as strongly as a shake of the head could express any thing, his full persuasion of the impossibility of accomplishing so desirable an event, preceded his guest to the apartment (a small double-bedded room at the back-part of the house) in which Mr. Jordan had directed the corpse to be placed, for the purpose of applying those means of resuscitation which his experience suggested.

Here, extended on a flock-bed, Beresford perceived the body of this victim to the severity of the elements, when a very slight examination convinced him that the assertions of his host, who roundly declared the poor gentleman to be "as dead as Harry the Eighth," were indeed too fatally founded in fact.

Breathing therefore a sigh to the fate of the

the unfortunate sufferer, he proceeded, with the assistance of Clincher, to scrutinize the pockets of the deceased—a ceremony which that conscientious innkeeper asseverated was still to be performed. The produce of their search, when arranged upon the opposite bed, appeared, after the most minute investigation, to consist of a large black pocketbook, closely clasped—a leathern box, containing a few pinches of Lundyfoot—half-a-dozen shillings, and about ninepence in copper—the remains of a handkerchief, which seemed to have seen considerable service—and, lastly, Mr. Beresford extracted from an inner breast-pocket a moderately-sized bunch of keys, to which was attached one of a very peculiar construction. . . . . . .

Having satisfied themselves that no part of the effects belonging to the deceased had escaped their observation, Mr. Beresford dispatched his assistant for a light, by the help of which he proceeded to affix his seal to the pocketbook, which, toge-

ther with the other articles, after having made the landlord take a correct inventory of them, he then deposited in a closet in the room, the door of which being also sealed, the key was committed to the care of Clincher, with an injunction to send him early intelligence of the hour which the coroner might appoint for the inquest. Beresford then mounted his horse, inattentive to the repeated insinuations of Mr. Clincher, as to the rawness of the morning, and the beneficial effects of "peppermint cordial," or "cherry brandy," on the coats of the stomach in cold weather, and directed his course, as expeditiously as the nature of the road would admit, to the habitation of his late tenant, at the door of which he perceived old Andrew Robinson, the kind of half-domestic, half-companion, we have before alluded to, in conversation with one of the persons who had assisted in conveying his master to the Royal Oak.

On perceiving his approach, Stephen, for

for it was himself, retired, civilly touching his hat as he passed, while Andrew, drawing near, with a rueful aspect, exclaimed, in a dolorous tone—"Bad news, bad news, your honour! Your honour has heard, maybe, what has happened to poor master? well, well, to be sure, all things last but a time! I thought how it would be —my mind always misgived me, somehow, these Lunnon journeys would do him no good at last, travelling all night a-top o' them coaches, in all sorts of weather, and then three long miles to walk. No, no—it wasn't for nothing the death-watch ticked so close to my ear all last night, and the coffin flew out of the fire; besides, I dreamt of water, and to dream of water, you know, sir, always signifies ——"

"Never mind what it signifies, my good Andrew," said his auditor (alighting, and cutting short a string of prodigies, which, though of a humbler nature, might have vied in number and variety with those

 which

which the historian records to have attended "imperial Cæsar, dead and turned to clay"); "it is but too true, Andrew, that your master has left this world, I trust, for a better; and all we can do now is to pay proper respect to his remains, and secure his effects for his son, who, it is to be hoped, will benefit society by a judicious use of those hoards which my unfortunate friend must have accumulated."

"His son? Ah! poor lad—poor young gentleman! it will be a sad loss to him, for his father loved him even better than he did his money; nay, the very day he set out on this last journey, he told me he should soon see his dear Charles; it is now five years since he left home to go to Oxford college, or some sich place, and master has been more near and stingy-like ever since, always scolding and grumbling at me for being wasteful, and saying I should ruin him, and sich like; always a-scraping and scraping, and all for master Charles: a fine lad he was, to be sure, for all he was a little

little mischievous, and once set my wig afire. I remember he had a brown mole on the tip of his left ear, and that is sure to prognostify——"

"No matter what," cried Beresford, hastily: "a truce, my good fellow, to your predictions of the future, and let us look a little to the present, which alone ought to occupy our attention now. Mr. Baldwin is no more; and although I am persuaded his son is pursuing a course of education somewhere in the neighbourhood of the metropolis, still I know not the precise spot of his residence: of this, however, the papers of my friend will, of course, furnish us with the requisite information. In the mean time, Robinson, I would wish you to go immediately to Mr. Bagshaw, who has, I know, been in the habit of doing business for Mr. Baldwin, and request him to ride over directly, and assist me in the examination I am about to make, and the measures which must be taken for the security of the property:

so let me have a crust of bread and cheese, with a glass of your mild beer: take my horse, and I will wait your return in the kitchen. Be as speedy as you can."

With part of this requisition the humble *maître d'hôtel* professed his readiness to comply: the remains of a small loaf of coarse brown bread, and even a piece of cheese, the first mouthful of which brought tears into Mr. Beresford's eyes, were actually produced on the table; but beer of any description, being an article which very much tends to the improper and superfluous secretion of bile, from a laudable attention to his own health, and a tender regard for that of honest Andrew, had long been erased from the by-no-means luxurious catalogue of dainties which composed Mr. Baldwin's domestic bill of fare. To make amends for the omission, a glass of pure spring water, which Robinson, on the authority of his late master, though not without some degree of hesitation, did not scruple to pronounce a much more refresh-

ing

ing and salubrious beverage, was substituted in its stead; and the worthy domestic, having, after sundry contortions both of limb and feature, succeeded in attaining the summit of the saddle, set out on his embassy with a degree of earnestness and goodwill, that rendered it difficult to discover whether the legs of the quadruped, or of the biped who bestrode him, proceeded with the greater celerity of motion; while Mr. Beresford, who stood watching his departure from the window, as soon as he beheld him fairly started, returned to the enjoyment of his savoury repast, and the meditations which were to be his sole companions till his return.

By dint of much assiduity and perseverance, assisted by an occasional insertion of the forefinger of his whip-hand between the pummel of the saddle and the spinal marrow of his Bucephalus, our friend Andrew contrived to reach the point of his destination, without any more serious disaster than a rather considerable excoriation

of

of the epidermis, in that part of his person most exposed to the power of friction during this unwonted equestrian expedition.

Riding up, and knocking at a large door in the town of Appleton, on which a radiant brass plate, that glittered in the sun with a brilliance almost defeating its ostensible purpose, informed the curious passenger that the mansion whose entrance it adorned was the habitation of Mr. Bagshaw, solicitor, he was fortunate enough to find, in answer to his inquiries, that that gentleman was at home; and on resorting to a gilded handle on one side, significantly inscribed with the words, "office bell," the long-continued reverberations of sound produced by his application to that instrument, at length procured the appearance of a young gentleman (for such his ample pantaloons, the voluminous folds of his cravat, and the exquisite arrangement of his hair, in spite of the pen which protruded from behind his ear, announced him

him to be), who, on learning his business, ushered him, with no slight degree of self-importance, into the presence of the personage he was in quest of.

Mr. Peter Bagshaw, attorney at law (or rather solicitor, the former being now become an almost-exploded term), was seated in an inner room, to which an office, surrounded by several lofty desks, served as an antichamber, at a circular table, covered with green baize, and supporting several huge skins of parchment, emblazoned with mystic characters, one of which divided his attention with a plate of buttered muffins, the savoury companion of a large bason of souchong, which smoked at his elbow. His person, mean and diminutive, was enveloped in a cotton dressing-gown, and derived additional splendour from a pair of red morocco slippers; his face, thin, sallow, and meagre, contained a pair of little red ferret eyes, whose quick and incessant revolutions gave an expression of *fierté* to a set of features

never

never handsome, and on which that cruel enemy to beauty, the smallpox, had left traces of its ravages in no common degree. His short sandy-coloured whiskers, surmounted by a *chevelure* of the same agreeable complexion, were so little disguised, in point of hue, by a somewhat redundant application of hair-powder, that they would, in all probability, have defied the most active energies of the Tricosian Fluid itself to produce any material alteration in their appearance.

One side of the apartment was occupied by sundry shelves, containing various small partitions, technically termed "pigeon-holes," most of which exhibited to view bundles of papers, labelled—"Giles *versus* Humphreys,"—"Higginbotham *against* Marrowfat,"—"*Ex parte* Wilkinson," and divers other denominations. Three large boxes of block tin, japanned, and inscribed with the names of gentlemen resident in the neighbourhood, were arranged on the opposite side of the room,

room, which was also decorated with a mahogany bookcase, supporting in its recesses, "Burns' Justice,"—"Coke upon Littleton,"—"Nolan on the Poor Laws,"—"Blackstone's Commentaries," and other works of various learned luminaries of the law. A map of the county, an almanack, and a couple of card-racks, filled with letters, composed the remaining furniture of the apartment.

On Robinson's admission to the presence, the learned gentleman, slightly elevating his eyes from the indenture he was perusing, cast a cursory glance upon his visitor, who, out of breath from his exertions, and perhaps a little daunted at finding himself suddenly in immediate contact with so great a man, stood bowing with the utmost humility; which almost immediately reverted to the parchment before him, delaying about a second in its progress, as the plate of muffins came within the scope of its regard, when selecting a most inviting portion of that delicate

licate article for instantaneous consumption, Mr. Bagshaw, in an impeded accent, demanded his business.

All the little lawyer's *nonchalance*, and air of important abstraction, on learning the object of his journey, vanished and forsook him at once. Starting on his feet, one hasty effort consigned the contents of the bason to their destined repository; the bell was rung, his horse was ordered with all possible dispatch; and long before that useful animal made his appearance at the front-door, a black coat and waistcoat, the one copiously besprinkled with powder behind, and the other slightly tinged with snuff before, had, together with a pair of boots, entirely superseded the gown and slippers. A few hurried directions to his clerk, Mr. Ralph Pounce, the elegant youth who had before acted as gentleman-usher, filled up the interval between his complete equipment *en cavalier*, and the appearance of his steed.—"Be sure, Ralph, not to forget the serving that subpœna upon

upon old Bargrave, in Smith's action; if he is not at home, you will certainly find him at the George and Vulture, or the Red Lion; attend to that yourself, for the old man's evidence is of the greatest consequence. Send Williams with the writ of ejectment to Wouldstay's; if the man's out, let him leave it with his wife. If the gentleman calls that lost his snuff-box, let him have it, on paying my bill for expences, but not without—the account lies on the mantlepiece; and when the waggoner that found it comes, tell him he must call again."

With a mixed air of consequence and deference, in which an observer would have been puzzled to ascertain which of those two qualities preponderated, the elegant Mr. Pounce received the directions of his superior, who now bestriding a stout serviceable gelding, which had been led round by a dirty-looking footboy, in a tawdry livery much soiled, set out with

honest

honest Andrew in his rear to join Mr. Beresford with all convenient dispatch.

On the road, in reply to his numerous inquiries, he drew from his companion as many of the circumstances attending the accident of the preceding night as Robinson himself was in possession of, and immediately on his arrival at the cottage saluted Mr. Beresford, who came out to receive him, with a most gracious bow.—"Good-morning, Mr. Beresford—good-morning, sir," cried the obsequious attorney, as he dismounted. "A fine day, sir, a very fine day for this time of the year; I have obeyed your summons, you see, sir, without loss of time. In cases of this nature, you do very right not to act without legal advice—very judicious, Mr. Beresford—very judicious indeed!"

The gentleman whom he addressed replied to his civilities merely by a bend of acknowledgment, and, as if intuitively shrinking from the pert familiarity of his

companion,

companion, led the way into the interior of the cottage, when, motioning him to be seated, he said, with some slight embarrassment—"Mr. Bagshaw, I have requested your professional attendance and assistance on this melancholy occasion, as I know you have been in the habit of acting as an adviser to my poor friend, Mr. Baldwin, more than once, and the rather, as I should wish to have some gentleman of the profession to aid me in the necessary search for any will the deceased may have left behind him, although circumstances induce me to believe that Mr. Baldwin has died intestate; in which case your presence will be desirable, to instruct me in the best method of securing the property for his son, who is unquestionably his heir, and whose address we shall, no doubt, discover from some of his late father's papers."

The lawyer bowed.

"I fear, however," resumed Mr. Beresford, "that I have to apologize for summoning

moning you from home unnecessarily on the present occasion, as I am apprehensive our purposed investigation must be delayed for the present, Mr. Baldwin's room being strongly secured. The keys which would admit us are, I have no doubt, the same which were found in his pocket, and which still remain deposited in the custody of the innkeeper; I presume, therefore, we must await the result of the inquest, before we can, consistently with propriety, avail ourselves of the use of them, unless you would recommend the forcing the door, as to which I wish to be entirely guided by your advice. Permit me, sir, to shew you to the apartment."

Rising as he ended, Beresford led the way up a small flight of stairs, to a room immediately over the one in which they had been sitting, and which Robinson identified as being the bedroom of his late master; the door, however, was firmly locked, and resisted their utmost efforts to obtain a passage.

Finding

Finding it in vain to attempt to procure admission without making use of violence, Bagshaw, although not a little disappointed, declined resorting to forcible measures, but suggested the propriety of affixing seals to the door, and leaving some trustworthy and responsible person in charge of the premises, until the coroner's verdict should enable them to gain access by easier means, observing at the same time, that even should they succeed in entering the room, they would, in all probability, be still as far as ever from obtaining their object; a man of Mr. Baldwin's habits having doubtless secured every thing under lock and key.

Indeed, both he and Beresford perfectly recollected a certain large iron chest, which occupied a corner of the apartment, and which neither of them, although they did not think it necessary to confide their ideas on the subject to each other, had any hesitation in supposing would be found to contain the vouchers of the property,

perty, as well as directions for its disposal—"For," added Mr. Bagshaw, "your conjecture of my poor client's having died intestate, Mr. Beresford, I believe I may venture to pronounce erroneous, as I myself drew up, according to his desire, the copy of a will, which was executed some years ago, and the counterpart of which is at this moment in my office."

"Indeed," cried Beresford, with an air of chagrin, which, in spite of his efforts to conceal it, betrayed to the observant eye of the attorney, that this piece of intelligence was far from pleasing; "and what, my good sir, might be the general tenor of its contents? I do not ask for particulars, since, no doubt, possessed, as I know my friend to have been, of considerable property (though not, I have reason to suppose, to the extent many people may imagine), a deed of that kind must, of course, be voluminous."

"Oh no, no!" replied Bagshaw, "quite

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the contrary, I believe, quite short and explicit. 'The multiplicity of things of the kind I have since been engaged in, render it impossible for me to recall the precise contents to my memory; but as well as I can recollect, quite brief, giving and bequeathing all and every his property, real and personal, wheresoever and whatsoever, to his only son, Charles Baldwin—not a single legacy, I am pretty sure—not above half-a-dozen lines: nay, by-the-bye, if I am not mistaken, your name is inserted as his executor."

As he uttered these words, the man of law could not forbear casting a sly glance at the countenance of his auditor, fully expecting, perhaps, to discover evident traces of disappointment in it at the failure of a bequest, which he had now little doubt but Beresford had sanguinely expected, and which, if report were to be believed, would be far from unacceptable to that gentleman, whose finances, according to the insinuations of rumour, were

by no means likely to continue in the prosperous state they had formerly maintained. In point of fact, it had been hinted, that very morning, that a house in the city, of some repute in the mercantile world, with which Mr. Beresford was known to have been connected in the earlier part of his life, and of which a relation was still one of the leading partners, was supposed to be on the verge of bankruptcy. The truth of the story itself, however, was doubted; yet had it been established, although a few of the gossips, both male and female, who inhabited the town of Appleton, whispered that it was possible Mr. Beresford might still be secretly connected with the concern, a large majority, from his retired and domestic habits, and well-known aversion to business, gave little credit to the report.

Nevertheless, if this was really Bagshaw's expectation, he was deceived. An expression of emotion did indeed slightly pass over the strongly-marked features

of

of the object of his scrutiny, but so vague and undefined in its nature, as completely to baffle his penetration, and to leave it impossible for him to decide whether the slight suffusion he observed were of a pleasurable nature, or one arising from vexation and regret.

The idea he had started was therefore immediately acted upon; and wax being produced, the door was secured, under the impression of the Bagshaw crest—a fox proper, passant, guardant, with two tails.

This ceremony having been performed, and Robinson placed in strict charge of the house, and every thing it contained, the two coadjutors departed together for Appleton, having first mutually agreed to meet at the Royal Oak on the day which should be appointed for the customary inquiry, and proceed thence, as soon as the law's delay would allow them, to execute the commission they had imposed upon themselves.

CHAPTER III.

Mar. Sir! sir! the man of honour is come!
Newly alighted. — — — — —
Sir Giles. — — — Let them sound
A princely welcome! — — MASSINGER.

THE bells of St. Mary's church were ringing a merry peal, on the eventful morning which ushered in the new year, to the great oblectation of the worthy denizens of Appleton, most of whom were mighty lovers of harmony, when a throng of visitors, of all kinds and degrees, with vehicles of every description, from the landau and four, through all the several gradations of family coach, chariot, curricle, tilbury, and humble buggy, to that still humbler mode of conveyance described by the facetious George Colman as "a ten-toed machine kept by the haymakers in

in Ireland," preferred by so many probably from veneration on account of its antiquity, (pedestrianism being, beyond controversy, one of the most ancient in the circle of the arts and sciences), assembled round the portico of a respectable-looking mansion, situate near the entrance of the town, which had for many succeeding years been considered as the residence of the principal family in the place. By a fatality by no means singular, this edifice had not, for two generations, afforded an asylum to its lawful proprietors, who, reduced in circumstances and condition, contented themselves with a much smaller habitation in the neighbourhood, and derived no slight accession to their income from letting the once-cherished mansion of their forefathers to casual occupiers of a more wealthy description than themselves.

By one of these it was at present tenanted. The preceding Thursday had exhibited a plain but handsome dark green

chariot and four, followed by two outriders, drawing up to its entrance, attended *en suite* by a town-built coach and a hack chaise, both loaded with trunks, imperials, ladies' maids, bandboxes, and other lumber; and a fine-looking robust old gentleman, with a florid complexion and a military air, having made his appearance at church in the rector's pew, on the succeeding Sunday, supporting on his arm a showy dame, whose charms, now past their meridian, by the assistance of Parisian carmine, and the aid of the inimitable Gowland, still gave evidence of their pristine loveliness. The first question, of course, on the ensuing Monday, among all the Appleton loungers, after their usual and hurried morning salutation, was—"Have you been to call on the general?" or, "Are you going to leave your card at lady Delaval's?"—interrogations, one or other of which were invariably answered in the affirmative by all whose situation in life would afford them

them the most distant prospect of being able to enroll a baronet among the list of their acquaintance.

Frank, open-hearted, and easy of access, sir. Charles Delaval, compelled unwillingly by his increasing infirmities to retire from the perils and bustle of a profession to which he was most ardently attached, and in which his courage and conduct had procured him the distinction his merits challenged, threw open his doors to the admission of those in whose neighbourhood circumstances, rather than any impulse of his own, had combined to fix him. True it is, that had his own feelings only been consulted, Appleton was not exactly the situation he would have selected as the spot of all others most congenial to his inclinations; but the very circumstances which communicated a repulsive sensation to him were unfortunately those which operated in a direct inverse ratio on his better half, and formed

the strongest attraction possible to lady Delaval.

Five and twenty years before the period we are now recording, sir Charles, then lieutenant Delaval of a marching regiment, had in this very town espoused the only daughter of an eminent carcase-butcher. The money he received with her (about seven hundred pounds) had purchased him a company, and laid the foundation of his future fortunes; the cadet of an ancient and most respectable family, neglected by his relations, who probably considered a pair of colours as an ample provision for a younger son, he was thrown early upon his own resources, and having, after a series of years spent in the most active and dangerous service, succeeded in acquiring rank and reputation in the army, the sudden and unexpected deaths of three intermediate heirs to the family honours had rendered him successor to a baronetage, and a considerable estate attached

attached to the title, almost at the very moment when a grape-shot from the walls of a fortress, the storming of which was allotted to the division under his command, by inflicting a severe wound on the hip, rendered him incapable of serving his country any longer in a military capacity.

Covered with laurels dearly earned, sir Charles, on reaching England, after having paid his respects to the higher powers, from whom he met with the reception his exertions merited, hastened, in company with his wife, to take possession of the property which had so unexpectedly become his own, when, after a considerable period spent in the settlement of his affairs, and the arrangement of the various concerns which now called for his superintendence and inspection, he yielded at length a reluctant assent to the entreaties of his lady, and returned to the metropolis, where, in a few days, at the house of a mutual friend, he met, for the first time

since his revisit to his native country, Mr. Beresford, the gentleman so often mentioned in the course of this history, who happened to be at that time in London on business, with whom he joyfully renewed an acquaintance commenced many years before in the days of his courtship, when, quartered in Appleton Barracks, he had received, in common with the other officers of his regiment, the attentions of the inhabitants of that town and its vicinity.

This rencontre was no less agreeable to Beresford than to the general, who insisted on carrying his old friend, as he styled him, home with him to dinner; and maintained his point with such perseverance of goodwill, that, unable to resist or elude the vehement entreaties of his old companion, in spite of the disinclination he felt to pay his respects to the daughter of his *ci-devant* purveyor of mutton, Mr. Giles Hucklebone, Beresford suffered himself to be prevailed upon to countermand the chop he had ordered at his coffeehouse,

and

and accompanied sir Charles to Brook-street, where he had taken furnished lodgings, till a suitable establishment could be arranged; the town-house of the late baronet having gone, with every thing in his power to bequeath, to his dowager and her relations.

But little time was allowed them for mutual recapitulations, before the carriage drawing up to the door of a respectable-looking house, sir Charles alighted, and ushered his friend into a handsome and well-furnished suite of rooms, at the upper end of the last of which a lady rose from a *chaise longue*, to receive him, dressed in all the extravagance of the reigning mode, and certainly bearing so little resemblance to the well-remembered appearance and *côtume* of Molly Hucklebone, that, but for the instantaneous recognition of himself by his fair hostess, and an eager salutation, in tones no mortal who had once heard them could ever forget, the asto-

 nished

nished Beresford would most undoubtedly have conceived that his friend, being left a widower, must have taken to himself a second helpmate, as dissimilar as possible to his first.

In point of fact, the period which had elapsed since her departure from Appleton had produced a complete metamorphosis in this fair lady. The variety of scenes she had passed through, the society to which she had been introduced in the course of the roving life led by all those who are attached to the peregrinations and changes of a marching regiment, assisted by the unwearied application and endeavours of her husband, whose affection, while it did not blind him to her deficiencies, made him most anxious to supply them, had combined to soften down many of her asperities; while the bold, confident look and manners, which had distinguished the bouncing daughter of the honest butcher, her loud masculine tone of voice,

and

and boisterous mode of address, were by no means without parallel among her more modish acquaintance.

Delaval, indeed, was far from being ill calculated for the task he had undertaken. Born with strong passions, which he had never been accustomed to check or control, and left entirely to his own guidance, at an age which of all others more especially demands the good offices of a warning friend and guardian, with about as much knowledge of mankind, and what is generally termed the world, as the generality of youths of his age may be supposed to possess of Coptic or Chaldee, his very susceptible heart had fallen an easy victim to the buxom graces and coquettish airs of the robust and rosy-cheeked Susan, who, pleased with her conquest, and having long set her heart on figuring in the station of an "officer's lady," was yet too cunning to allow him any advantage over her which might effectually mar her hopes, at the same time taking sufficient care to

give

give every encouragement to his passion, till she finally succeeded in accomplishing her aim. Still, though unhackneyed in the ways of men, from an early introduction to good company, Charles Delaval, to a handsome and gentlemanly exterior, united all that elegance of deportment and manner, that almost-intuitive politeness, which the army is perhaps the best school to foster and bring to maturity.

Feelingly alive to whatever might trespass against the rules of that society in which he had been accustomed to move, his acquirements in this respect rendered him by no means an unfit person to superintend the remoulding' of his wife's manners, and the adopting her conduct and conversation to the rank in life to which his affection had elevated her. His first step, therefore, had been to purchase immediately into a different regiment, from motives which may easily be divined, his second to set seriously about instructing Mrs. Delaval in those indispensable requisites

requisites which her new situation demanded. The soil he had to work upon was neither sterile nor unkindly, and although encumbered with weeds, which a person less interested in their destruction than himself might almost have considered as defying the hand of cultivation to remove, a few years of patient and unremitting attention had certainly rooted out a considerable portion of the rubbish; and at the time we are now speaking of, if the spirit and language of the butcher's daughter would sometimes break forth in spite of all his care, still her general deportment was not much below that of many women who moved in the same sphere.

Beresford's surprise, therefore, though natural, soon wore off, and both at and after dinner he exerted himself to pay those attentions to his fair hostess which every woman conceives her due, and which few men were better able to discharge. Indeed he soon rose most rapidly in lady Delaval's

Delaval's good graces; so much so, that in the course of conversation, finding, in answer to one of her numerous inquiries into the present state of her native town, that the principal mansion it contained was at present unoccupied, she immediately expressed a most eager desire to become its temporary inhabitant, declaring nothing could afford her so much delight as revisiting the scenes of her earlier days, and making her personal observations on the changes time must have wrought on the well-remembered theatre of her youth.

To poor sir Charles this intimation of her wishes came like a clap of thunder. From the first moment that the conversation had taken this unlucky turn to the concerns of the good people of Appleton, he had been hemming, fidgeting in his chair, and playing with his wine-glass, at the same time making sundry ineffectual efforts to introduce a more agreeable subject; not that he entertained the most distant idea of the alarming proposition which

which was about to wind up the topic, but simply from a wish of getting rid of certain unpleasant reminiscences connected with what he could not but feel was a *mesalliance*, and which combined to render that unlucky spot the place of all others he would most wish to avoid; nor would he, perhaps, have been very much chagrined had the name of the borough of Appleton never met his ears again—a sentiment, too, in which he had assured himself somewhat precipitately his lady must strongly participate, since well knowing her ladyship's fondness for aping the manners and mode of living of her superiors, together with her constantly-expressed abhorrence of every thing that was "low" or "vulgar," in the simplicity of his heart, he never for an instant supposed that her native town, in which she had figured in so humble a sphere, and where so many living witnesses of her former condition were still in existence, would be the last place to which she

would

would willingly bend her steps. When, therefore, the petrifying sounds burst upon his ear, the elegantly-cut wine-glass, which had proved so useful an alleviator of his uneasy paroxysms, dropped at once from his hand, and glittered in shining fragments on the carpet.

"Madam!—lady Delaval!—what the devil do you mean?" at length issued in broken accents from the lips of the astonished baronet; "what can possibly induce you to suppose that I would ever consent to go down to that infernal town?"

"And why not, sir Charles?"

This interrogation, and the tone in which it was put, were for a time unanswerable: confused at the suddenness of the attack, and by the unexpected quarter in which he was assailed, it was some time before sir Charles could rally his scattered senses sufficiently to reply; his reasons it would have been impossible for him to state in the presence of Mr. Beresford, nor perhaps would he have chosen to avow, even

even to his consort, that which he would, if possible, have concealed from himself. In this dilemma, therefore, he contented himself with repeating his determination not to accede to her proposal, and not choosing to assign the true reason, very wisely gave no reason at all.

This mode of proceeding, had the rules of Aristotle been strictly attended to, must, of course, have put an end to the debate, the most subtile disputant finding it a difficult matter to contend long with an antagonist who confines himself to a simple *negatur*; but as in matrimonial controversies the laws of logic are less strictly adhered to than in the immediate vicinity of Alma Mater, so the silence of one party is by no means to be considered as an infallible symptom of defeat. Lady Delaval, sooth to say, could as soon have constructed a cathedral as a syllogism, and it is a doubtful point if she had ever drawn an inference in her life; nevertheless nature had been so liberal, and had bestowed on

her

her such a rare talent for argumentation, that the necessity for the assistance of art was in a great measure superseded: so great indeed was her unsophisticated genius in this respect, that it may be questioned whether the redoubtable Aldrich himself, with all his formidable battering train of majors, minors, and consequences, would have been able to force her to capitulate, and admit herself vanquished.

Fresh, vigorous, and invincible, she proceeded immediately to attack the outworks of the baronet at once by sap and storm; and though no visible impression was made in the first assault, a letter, which Mr. Beresford received a few days after his return, requesting him to take measures for securing the house in question, and signed Charles Delaval, gave abundant proof that the artillery of the fair combatant had not been directed in vain. His own observations on the lady's tactics having left him in little doubt as to the eventual termination of the siege, this

this proof of her skill in engineering was far from being unexpected; and as the baronet's letter gave him *carte blanche*, a very few days enabled him to transmit an account of the success of his negociation.

The letter which announced his having executed their commands in the hiring of Appleton Hall contained also a request, or rather commission, which his friend did not hesitate to comply with, and in consequence a fine lad of fifteen, whom Mr. Beresford had simply described as being his ward, was added to the travelling party whose arrival had caused such a general sensation in the town.

The concourse of visitors who thought it necessary to make their calls of ceremony on the morning above-mentioned was considerable, and the conversation of that lively and interesting cast which generally prevails on similar occasions in a country town. The ladies and gentlemen were "very glad" of such an agreeable addition to their society, and "very sorry" for the disagreeable

disagreeable journey lady Delaval must have had at so unpleasant a time of the year; "very glad" that the new-comers meant to honour the assembly with their presence in the evening, and "very sorry" for a slight cold in the head which had plagued sir Charles for a week. In regard to that inexhaustible subject, the weather, with the exception of a trifling disagreement between a maiden lady of the name of Drummond and the rector's sister, herself a votary of Diana, as to the precise quarter the wind was in, the whole party were, as usual, tolerably unanimous, and having paid their respects to the sandwich-tray, and dispatched the modicum of Madeira customary on these solemn occasions, retired well satisfied with their reception, and too much pleased with anticipating the *agrémens* of certain dinner parties the general had obscurely hinted at, to find any fault with people who appeared to have so hospitable a turn of mind; even Miss Drummond declaring to her

her companion, the curate, as they descended the flight of stone steps which led from the house—"that, considering her very low origin, lady Delaval was certainly not *quite* so vulgar as might have been expected; and that, for her part, she did not at all believe what ill-natured people reported, of her having had part of her fortune paid down in mutton-chops."

CHAP-

CHAPTER IV.

Behold four Kings in majesty rever'd,
With hoary whiskers, and a forked beard,
And four fair Queens, whose hands sustain a flower,
The expressive emblem of their softer power;
Four Knaves, in garb succinct, a trusty band,
Caps on their heads, and halberts in their hand;
And party-colour'd troops, a shining train,
Draw forth to combat on the velvet plain. POPE.

"So, doctor," cried Mrs. Gruby to her partner, taking up the cards to deal, "so the Delavals are to be here to-night. Mr. Jordan, I'll trouble you to cut, sir! and pray, doctor, what is your opinion of sir Charles? Don't you think him a remarkably handsome-looking gentleman, and *wery* genteel?"

"Madam," replied doctor Drybone, in a deep sepulchral tone of voice, "you have forgot to mark the odd trick."

"*Wery*

"*Wery* true; bless me, doctor! and so I had; but pray, sir, tell me what you think of the general, and is not his son a very fine young man?"

"His son, ma'am!" cried Miss Drummond, one of the opponents in the rubber; "I never understood lady Delaval had a son, or indeed any children."

"Oh dear! yes, he has, ma'am, a son; a remarkable *hellygant* youth, and the *wery* picture of the general; the likeness is indeed quite surprising: I happened to be passing at the time the carriages stopped, and saw him get out; I looked him full in the face, and should have known him anywhere for the general's son—a most striking resemblance indeed!"

"Really you surprise me," said the spinster; "it is very extraordinary the young gentleman never made his appearance, either at church or this morning during our call. Surely there must be some mistake."

"Oh no! Mrs. Gruby is quite correct, I assure you," interrupted Mr. Jordan, "and the young gentleman is exactly what she describes him to be—a very fine physiognomy, and quite the contour of his papa's head, especially about the upper part; just his make, from the occiput to the parietal bone."

"As to his *hogsippets* and his bones, Mr. Jordan, I know nothing about them, but he is the *wery moral* of him in his face."

"Very true, my dear madam, your remark is perfectly just: it occurred to me most forcibly, so that, though I had only a glimpse of him the other day in the chariot with the general, I could not fail to recognise him this morning immediately when I met him, just by Hawkins' Wood, riding with Mr. Beresford: but pray, ladies, what can be the reason master Delaval is in mourning? I did not observe it to be the case either with sir Charles or her ladyship."

Doctor Drybone here impatiently broke

in

in upon the discussion, by observing, that spades were trumps, and that Miss Drummond was to play.

"The king of diamonds, doctor.—In mourning! you must be wrong, Mr. Jordan; only in black, I dare say; every body wears black now."

"No, ma'am, I repeat, in mourning, as, in addition to his sable habiliments, he wore a crape bandage round his hat."

"With Mr. Beresford, and in mourning!" exclaimed young Trevanion, the curate, who, leaning on the mantlepiece, stood watching the progress of the game; "why, surely, Jordan, you have not mistaken young Baldwin, the son of the old gentleman who was frozen to death some little time ago, for the son of sir Charles Delaval! Such, however," he continued, "I must conceive to be the case, as I this morning met Mr. Beresford on horseback with a lad answering your description, whom he introduced to me as the son of

 his

his late friend, adding, that he was at present a resident in his house."

This solution, which would have at once accounted for the phenomenon of the young man's nonappearance at the visit, and the colour of his dress, was, however, violently scouted by Mrs. Gruby, who, like many other arguers, as well of the other sex as of her own, affirmed the thing to be impossible, simply because the probability of it had never occurred to herself; and with some degree of hesitation opposed by the learned member of the faculty, his unwillingness to believe, and his still greater reluctance to confess, the possibility of his having been mistaken in any circumstance whatever, being nearly vanquished by the overwhelming force of evidence contained in the declaration of Trevanion.

From this dilemma he was fortunately relieved by his fair partner, who, naturally believing what she eagerly desired might

be

be true, exclaimed, with much animation, and an earnestness of manner which shewed the interest she took in the subject—" Bless me, Mr. Trevanion, do you really mean to say, that the rich young heir is come down and going to reside at Appleton too? What will the young man do with all his money? how will he contrive to spend it all? We girls shall all be pulling caps for him. He must and shall marry—and is he so very handsome, Mr. Trevanion?"

" Why really, Miss Drummond, I must confess myself but an indifferent judge as to the beauty of my own sex; though my admiring glances must, long since, I trust, have convinced *you* that I am by no means unqualified to appreciate it duly in yours: on this point, therefore, I must refer you to Mrs. Gruby and Mr. Jordan, whose accuracy in the detection of a lurking likeness, which certainly escaped my observation, is sufficient to stamp them in-

 controvertible

controvertible deciders on the various lineaments of 'the human face divine.' As to matrimony, I should doubt whether Mr. Baldwin has yet thought very seriously on the subject, since, from his appearance, I do not conceive that he has yet seen his sixteenth birthday."

There was a something in the beginning of this speech, which, notwithstanding the disappointment conveyed by its concluding remark, sounded very harmonious in the ears of Miss Letitia Drummond. That lady was indeed arrived at that awkward era of a spinster's life, when she may be said to be "neither fish, flesh, fowl, nor good red-herring," that is to say, she acknowledged herself to be *just* turned of five-and-twenty, and her companions and acquaintances, who for the last five or six years past had so frequently heard her make the same assertion, would have been worse than infidels to have entertained any doubt of the veracity of a declaration so often repeated. Indeed Rosalind's observation,

vation, that "time stands still with lawyers in the vacation, for they sleep between term and term, and so perceive not how time moves," is no less correct when applied to the virgin sisterhood, with whom old Chronos, with his scythe and hour-glass, is apt to be equally stationary during the momentous interval, when from *five-and-twenty* the *girl*, without an intervening instant, passes at once into the *single lady* of *five-and-thirty*.

On the tremendous confines of this new state of existence, Miss Drummond was already vacillating, and a few, a very few more years, would, unless a change of condition, the more eagerly desired, as its consummation appeared more problematical, shortly ensued, confirm her right to an appellation too odious to be mentioned to "ears polite." Hope, however, that staunch friend to those who have no other, had not yet forsaken her, and she still trusted to the power of charms which her

mirror, more faithful than gallant, began to tell her were a little, a *very* little, on the wane, to enable her yet to rise superior to her dear friend, Miss Drybone, and to lose, in the respectable title of matron, all apprehension of that dreaded and alarming nuncupative which our pen refuses to inscribe.

"Drowning persons catch at straws"—Miss Drummond caught at Mr. Trevanion—No wonder, then, the purport of the compliment he addressed to her rendered her insensible to the irony of his manner in uttering it, and, in the exultation of the moment, she half resolved to banish from her mind an incipient project, which had entered it within the last five minutes, of directing all her powers, mental and corporeal, to the subjugation of the unfortified heart of the youthful stranger.

But if the curate's harangue conveyed sensations of delight and complacency to the damsel he addressed, very different

was

was the effect produced by it on the sensorium of the dame to whom he alluded in its progress.

Of all the human race, there was but one individual for whom Mrs. Gruby entertained the highest degree of respect and admiration: this exalted character, against whose excellence and infallibility to express or entertain the slightest idea of disparagement was a crime of *læsæ majestatis*, was herself. Darting her indignant glances on the offending parson—" Mr. Trewanion," said she, " I beg, sir, you vont go to defer nobody to me; you ought to have more purliteness, sir, than to insinivate that a lady like me doesn't know how to distinguish vether a boy is like his father or not; and let me tell you, sir——"

" My dear madam, how entirely have you misunderstood me! I protest, that in the allusion you condescend to notice, I was merely doing justice to that talent for discrimination which all must allow to be Mrs. Gruby's characteristic, and of which,

 I will

I will venture to assert, she never gave more convincing proof than in her so readily detecting a resemblance which I from my heart believe, without any intentional disrespect to the company, not one person in the room possesses equal penetration to discover."

"None of your *insinuendoes*, Mr. Trewanion—none of your *insinuendoes*, sir, if you please; I understand you vell enough; I knows ven people are jeering, sir, and I vould have you to know that there is nothing I despise so much as your *insinuendoes* and your *double saint andrews*, sir, that says von thing and means another."

The heightened carmine and coruscating eyes of the angry fair, that emitted as numerous and as vivid sparks as a squib on a rejoicing night, would have deterred a less courageous hero than her present antagonist from exposing himself to the whole fury of the storm that lowered upon her brow, and threatened to explode; the undaunted youth, however, shrunk not from the

danger,

danger, but with an air of mock humility, was commencing a further apology, which would certainly have had the effect of drawing down upon him such an overwhelming burst of indignation as could scarcely have failed to render him completely *hors de combat,* when Pallas, in the shape of doctor Drybone, threw her protecting ægis between the combatants, and by the momentous question—" Have you an honour, partner?" disarmed her rage, by calling off her attention to the game, now in a critical situation.

The interrogatory was answered in the affirmative, and in the exultation arising from success, the subject of debate would probably have been discontinued, had not a query from Miss Drybone, as to the amount of property Mr. Baldwin was supposed to have left behind him, been eagerly replied to by the fair Letitia.

" Oh, my dear creature, his property is immense! quite another Elwes, only a great deal richer. They say he could have

bought half the county. I heard Mr. Bagshaw say there was a large room under ground, surrounded by enormous iron chests, fastened with four locks a-piece, and filled with money-bags, and wealth of all descriptions."

This assertion, which, in point of exaggeration, did not much exceed the celebrated story of the three black crows (Bagshaw having, on his return from his first interview with Mr. Beresford at the cottage, merely let fall a few hints about the strong-box of the deceased), produced a surprising effect upon her audience, all of whom, with the exception of Trevanion, fixed their eyes in mute attention on the narratress, while the curate, with a significant smile upon his countenance, suggested that, if this were indeed the fact, it was far from improbable that the long-sought-for philosopher's stone had been at length acquired, and would most likely be discovered safely locked up in one of these massy repositories.

"Stones,

"Stones indeed! a likely matter truly!" exclaimed Mrs. Gruby, who had neither forgotten nor forgiven what she styled the parson's *imperance*; "vell, vould any body but a *ninkum* go to suppose the old gentleman vould take the trouble to lock up stones? No, no, sir, take my vord for it, Mr. Baldwin knew better than that. I dares to say them boxes are all full of money, and guineas, and bank-notes, and sich like *wallidbles*, and not full of stones indeed!"

Before Trevanion could give utterance to the congratulation he was about to address to the lady, on a remark which discovered such a depth of sagacity and penetration, Mr. Jordan, who naturally conceived that all conversation which trenched in the slightest degree upon any subject connected with chemistry came properly under his department, and being desirous as well to display his own erudition, as to enlighten the obfuscated intellects of Mrs. Gruby, prevented him by saying—

"Very

" Very correctly remarked indeed, madam!—infinitely just! Stones are perhaps of all things the least likely to tempt the cupidity of the avaricious; but my dear Mrs. Gruby is no doubt aware that the stone mentioned by my friend Mr. Trevanion is by no means that calcareous, argillaceous, or siliceous fossil, so common in every road and field, and which unlucky boys feel so strong a propensity to hurl about in all directions, to the manifest danger, and frequent destruction of the windows of the unwary vicinage; still less did he mean to allude to the more precious productions of the mineral world, the ruby, the amethyst, the emerald, or the diamond. The philosopher's stone, or whatever else empirics may choose to denominate it, was a fictitious preparation, said to possess the miraculous faculty of turning and transmuting the baser metals into the most pure and refined gold and silver. This would indeed have exhibited sufficient charms to induce any one to

to endeavour to appropriate it to himself, had it existed anywhere but in the imaginations of those ridiculous impostors, the Rosicrucians."

"Dear me, Mr. Jordan, and who were they?" said Miss Drummond, elevating her brows with a stare of unfeigned astonishment, till her eyes appeared as round as an apple.

"A set of blockheads, my dear Miss, who pretended to be in the possession of that, as well as of many other secrets no less wonderful, such, for instance, as the elixir of immortality, the method of preparing everlasting lamps, and a thousand other quackeries of a similar description."

For the first time during the evening doctor Drybone raised his eyes from the card-table, and fixed them full upon the orator; having surveyed him for some time with looks in which complacency bore no share—"And do you really, Mr. Jordan," says he, "mean to stigmatize the

erudite

erudite brethren of the Rosy Cross as blockheads and impostors, or confound them with quacks and empirics? Will not all their deep researches into the mysteries of nature, all their laborious patience in pursuit of the *opus magnum*, suffice to procure them an exemption from the odious suspicion of being cheats and *charlatans?* In regard to the *universal solvent*, the *menstruum of the Red Dragon*, or what you are pleased to call the philosophers' stone, Mr. Jordan, my belief in its existence is not to be shaken by the incredulity, real or pretended, of the present generation, who are apt to assent to nothing which is not actually demonstrated to their five senses; more especially as in regard to the article of the ever-burning lamps, the fact has been established beyond controversy; nay, I have at this moment the pleasure of possessing, in my own little museum, a fragment of one, discovered many years ago, in the sepulchre of the

learned

learned Albertus Stenkenbrüch, the favourite nephew and disciple of Christiern Rosencruz himself."

"Bless me, doctor Drybone!" again interrupted Letitia, "and have you really got a lamp that will burn for ever? well, of all things, I should like to see a lamp that would burn for ever!"

"And probably," said Trevanion, "would feel little reluctance to ascertain the truth of its pretensions personally, living through countless ages a sacred vestal, guarding the everlasting fire?"

"Oh dear, no, Mr. Trevanion, I have no desire to be any such thing; but I must own I should be delighted to see the curiosity which doctor Drybone describes."

"In that respect, madam, I am most happy that it is in my power to gratify you, as well as any gentleman," throwing a glance, half angry, half triumphant, at the discomfited Jordan, "or lady of the company, who may feel inclined to favour the rectory with a visit, for the purpose of satisfying

satisfying so laudable a thirst after useful information."

The invitation to inspect the curiosities deposited at the parsonage, thus graciously accorded, was eagerly accepted by all within hearing, and the doctor, having now mounted his hobby, began to ride him at a most furious rate. It has been observed, that one of the finest strokes of nature, in the productions of our immortal bard, is when he represents master Silence, who says nothing while sober, no sooner getting drunk, than he at once becomes the noisiest man in the company. An effect not very dissimilar was produced by the mental intoxication of the reverend doctor Drybone.

Subtle and persevering indeed must that disputant have been, who could have elicited an argument, or even an opinion, from the doctor, unconnected with the rules of whist, in which fascinating game his faculties were entirely absorbed and enveloped: by one way, and by one way only,

only, was he accessible—his museum—his Roman, Grecian, Egyptian, and, as he asserted, some few and rare antediluvian specimens of antiquity, handed down from the remotest ages. Here, and here alone, the doctor was eloquent, was inspired; and the dissertation he now commenced on *lampades, amphoræ, pateræ,* and all the various *et cetera* of Etruscan pottery, would have been terminated only by the breaking up of the assembly, had not Mr. Bagshaw at this moment advanced from the upper end of the apartment, and inquired what cause was before the court?

"One in which you are likely to turn out a most material witness, as you have already been subpœnaed by a fair lady, to prove that Mr. Baldwin junior has inherited from his late father a subterranean treasure, at least equal in amount to that so luckily discovered by the fortunate Ali Baba."

"Indeed, Mr. Trevanion, I can prove no such thing, as Mr. Baldwin so far from being

being in possession of the immense property for which every body gave him credit, has died poor, absolutely poor; a sum, not quite amounting to seven thousand pounds, is all that he has left behind him."

"Seven thousand pounds! why, dear me, Mr. Bagshaw, did not you tell captain Carbuncle, the other day, that there were I do not know how many large iron chests, all full of money? And did not you say ——"

"My dear young lady, I certainly did, at the time you allude to, inform the captain of *one* iron chest which stands in the bedroom of the deceased, and which I had then no doubt contained securities to a very large amount; on breaking the seals, however, which had been affixed to it by Mr. Beresford and myself, on the morning of his death, and examining its contents, we were surprised to find not above three hundred pounds in money and notes, together with India bonds and exchequer-bills for between six and seven thousand

pounds,

pounds, and a short testamentary instrument, in the handwriting of the deceased, a copy of which had been also previously deposited at my office, bequeathing the whole of his property to his son Charles, whom he recommends to the care of his friend Mr. Beresford, constituted by the will his guardian."

"So then," cried Mrs. Gruby, "this young *hair*, that was to be as rich as Pluto, turns out a mere nobody, after all! But pray, sir, can you tell me vether this is the lad that came down to Appleton with sir Charles and lady Delaval?"

"The very same, ma'am; the young gentleman was under the tuition of a clergyman, in the neighbourhood of London, and sir Charles, at Mr. Beresford's request, undertook to escort him into the country; indeed the parsimony, or, rather, the strict economy of his father, is, by this circumstance, accounted for, as the expence of the son's education must have nearly equalled the amount of the yearly interest of the property.

property. I must own I was astonished at the smallness of the sum, though Mr. Beresford informed me that, from several hints his friend had dropped, previous to his death, he had reason to suppose him far from the monied man many people imagined him to be. But see, here comes sir Charles Delaval."

Thus saying, he turned from the table, and proceeded to pay his respects to the baronet, a piece of civility which was received with much less cordiality than it was offered. The truth was, that the manners and appearance of this learned limb of the law were in themselves by no means prepossessing; in addition to which, an anecdote had been that day pretty generally discussed by the morning visitors, in which the conduct of Mr. Peter Bagshaw did not appear with that brilliance of colouring which dazzles and confounds the eye of the detractor by the purity and splendour of its refulgence.

The story told by the gossips of Appleton

ton was this, that a small silver snuff-box having been picked up in the road, at a short distance from Appleton, by a poor labouring man, was by him carried to the office of the aforesaid gentleman, who kindly took it into his own custody, promising to take proper steps for discovering the owner, and securing to the finder such reward as his generosity might dictate. The snuff-box was accordingly advertised, and soon after claimed by an officer on the recruiting service, in the neighbourhood, when, having correctly described the article, which was marked with his crest and cipher, and was of about two guineas value, he was directed to call again the next day. On being introduced to Mr. Bagshaw, at the appointed time, he was informed by him that the *tabatière* was undoubtedly the one described, and therefore entirely at his service, on paying the expences incurred; and that the man who found it would be satisfied with any thing he might think proper to give him. The

owner

owner declared his willingness to make every reasonable compensation, and the following account was handed to him:—

	£	s.	d.
To consulting with John Moody relative to a snuff-box found by him the said John Moody..	0	13	4
To drawing up an advertisement of said box....	0	6	8
To attending to advertise the said snuff-box in the S**** Mercury..............................	0	13	4
To attending to correct the press..............	0	13	4
Paid for insertion of said advertisement........	0	3	6
To consulting with lieutenant Mulcaster relative to snuff-box aforesaid	0	13	4
To second consultation with ditto	0	13	4
Clerk's fee	0	2	6
Total....	3	19	4

In regard to the reward, Mr. Bagshaw suggested that half-a-guinea would be considered a very handsome remuneration. To this bill, however, moderate as the charges may be thought, Mr. Mulcaster indignantly demurred, and stating his willingness to give the proposed reward, or even more to the finder, as being fully merited by his honesty, absolutely refused to discharge

discharge any other item of the account, except the advertising, and dared Mr. Bagshaw (whom we are sorry to add he characterized by a very harsh epithet) to detain his property. Mr. Bagshaw, bidding him take care how he aspersed the character of a member of the profession, positively refused to surrender the box, alleging that he had an undoubted lien upon the goods until his charges were paid; and the angry antagonists separated with mutual vituperation, the soldier threatening the lawyer with an action of trover, and the lawyer menacing him in return with damages for defamation. In the meantime, the box, "the cause and guerdon of the war," reposed quietly, unconscious of the bustle it had created, in the left-hand waistcoat-pocket of Mr. Peter Bagshaw, except when it was occasionally drawn out to recreate his nostrils with its titillating pungency, or exhibit to advantage the brilliant topaz that glittered on his little finger.

This trifling anecdote it was, in conjunction with a few more of a similar cast, which, strange as it may appear, induced sir Charles Delaval to meet the advances of Mr. Bagshaw with a much greater degree of coldness than he usually exhibited; extreme diffidence, however, being by no means that gentleman's foible, the repulsive manner of the baronet produced no other effect upon him, than a determination to vanquish it, if possible, by the easy familiarity of his address; and no other subject occurring readily on which he could expatiate at the moment, he repeated doctor Drybone's invitation to inpect his *sanctum sanctorum*, which he had overheard, adding, that he was perfectly certain the doctor and his guests would feel much gratified by the addition of sir Charles and lady Delaval to the party.

"Any invitation I may receive from our worthy rector, Mr. Bagshaw," replied sir Charles, very much annoyed by his indelicate forwardness and conceit, "I shall feel

feel honoured in paying every attention to; but as he is present, it is perhaps the less necessary that either of us should be indebted, on this occasion, to the good offices of a mutual friend; for such, I am happy to see you consider yourself, by your treating both of us with so little ceremony."

The lawyer, in spite of his natural effrontery, could not help feeling a strong suffusion pervade the natural bronze of his complexion at this quiet rebuke, and not only perceived that he was looking silly, but, what is worse, saw that others perceived it also.

While he was meditating a rally, he was somewhat relieved by the proprietor of the Museum, who, hearing what had passed, expressed the gratification he should feel, if the general and his lady would honour his little collection with their inspection, an offer which was good-humouredly accepted; and the following Thursday being fixed for the visit, the party shortly

 after

after broke up at their usual hour, and the company departed to their respective habitations, with very different sensations produced by the occurrences and conversation of the evening; Miss Drummond highly elated at the affected compliments and ironical admiration of Trevanion, and secretly congratulating herself on possessing two strings to her bow; Mrs. Gruby very much ruffled at losing seven points at shilling whist, and being quizzed by the parson; Bagshaw discomfited and foiled in the endeavour he had made to recommend himself to a titled acquaintance; while doctor Drybone sought his pillow, to dream of odd tricks, copper Othos, and Saxon warming-pans; and the curate walked slowly down the street, to indulge himself with a moonlight view of the chamber-window of a girl of seventeen, who was fast acquiring unlimited sway over his heart, and bade fair to engross the most devoted affections his warm and generous nature could feel; and then, with a

feeling

feeling of satisfaction which a lover only can understand, retired to his solitary couch, and fell asleep, murmuring the name of Mary Beresford.

CHAPTER V.

Therefore make straight the grave; the crowner hath sat, and finds it Christian burial. SHAKESPEARE.

You may have noticed in my library
A chest, where I have told you, brother,
The writings which concern our family,
With jewels, cash, and other articles
Of no mean value, were deposited. COLMAN.

THE fact had indeed proved to be as Mr. Bagshaw had stated it. On the morning appointed for the inquest, that gentleman had accompanied Mr. Beresford to the Royal Oak, when the jury having taken a view of the body of the unfortunate Baldwin, the seals on the closet-door were broken, and the articles found on his person were produced. As no marks of violence were perceptible upon the body, and no part of the property, which he might be

be supposed to carry about with him, appeared to be missing, little doubt could occur but that his untimely end was the work of accident, and the coroner proceeding to examine witnesses, Simmons and his friend Whitehead deposed as to the manner in which they discovered the corpse, adding, that he was quite dead, and even stiff, when they found him. The guard and the coachman of the D*** Highflyer were next examined, and declared that they had taken up the deceased, whom they well knew, from his having frequently travelled the road with them before, as a passenger, at the George Inn in the Borough, the evening before he was found dead; that he had, as usual, seated himself on the roof, and accompanied them as far as a certain turn of the road, where he had always been in the habit of getting down, and from which, as it appeared by the statement of others, a footpath led directly through Hawkins' Wood towards his own dwelling, a dis-

tance of rather more than two miles from the main road; that he had no bundle or parcel of any description with him; and that the time when he left the coach was between two and three o'clock in the morning, the weather very tempestuous, and snowing hard: the guard also mentioned, that having heard him repeatedly complain during the journey that he was far from well, he had strongly urged him, as the night was so boisterous, to go on with them four miles farther to Appleton, and remain there for the night; but that the deceased was obstinate, and persisted in his determination of proceeding home on foot.

Jordan, who had seen and examined the corpse immediately after its conveyance to Clincher's, was likewise interrogated as to his opinion of the mode by which the subject of the inquest came by his death, which the learned doctor gave in terms well calculated to edify and enlighten the understandings of the jury; most of them plain

plain farmers in the neighbourhood, who listened with the most earnest attention to a long dissertation upon the effects of cold on the human system, the circulation of the blood, with a slight episode in allusion to doctor Harvey, its ingenious discoverer, and a trifling digression on the nature of the peristaltic motion; all which he concluded by expressing his most decided conviction that death had, in this instance, been occasioned by the effects of extreme cold operating upon a frame enfeebled and debilitated, and that Mr. Baldwin, in plain language, had been frozen to death. So great a display of erudition was not lost on those to whom it was addressed, and, had they before entertained any doubts upon the subject, this declaration of so learned a man would have alone been sufficient to induce them to return a verdict, as they unhesitatingly did, of "accidental death."

This business being disposed of, the keys, pocketbook, &c. were delivered to Mr. Beresford, who claimed them in qua-

 lity

lity of executor—a fact the attorney confirmed, at the same time producing the copy of the will which had been left in his possession. Clincher was then called in, and informed that an undertaker would shortly make his appearance to prepare the body for interment, when his trouble would be taken into consideration, and adequately remunerated—an intimation which contributed to produce such a grin of satisfaction on the rubicund countenance of the landlord, as would have been attended with great effect, could his whole visage have been transferred to the slides of a phantasmagoria, or magic-lanthern.

This done, Beresford and his solicitor proceeded, as before agreed upon, to the cottage where Andrew Robinson remained in charge, and the fox, proper, passant, guardant, with two tails, being removed, one of the keys admitted them, without any difficulty, into the room which contained the iron chest, standing in undisturbed security by the side of that bed its master

was

was destined never more to occupy. The chest was large and massy, and the curiously-complicated appearance of the lock seemed to indicate that its wards could only be put in motion by the key, the peculiar construction of which caused it to make so conspicuous a figure on the bunch. In this conjecture they were not mistaken; the moment it was applied, with a slight exertion the bolts slowly and reluctantly gave, and exhibited its interior to the inquisitive glances of the *three* inspectors; for even honest Andrew, on shewing the gentlemen up stairs, not having had his presence forbidden, had remained in the apartment.

The curiosity, however, of two of the party, at least, met with a severe disappointment. Mr. Beresford, as he had before told his coadjutor, did not expect to discover the immense mine of wealth the other two had so fully made up their minds to the existence of, and, of course, was much less surprised when the contents of

the chest, which was not a quarter filled, were, on examination, ascertained to be no more in value than the sum Bagshaw had intimated to Miss Drummond. A small shagreen casket indeed, at the bottom of the box, was found to contain an elegant cross set with diamonds, apparently of a fine water, while a beautiful pair of bracelets, with necklace and earrings to match, seemed to designate the jewels as having formerly been the property of a handsome female, considerably past the first bloom of youth, whose portrait, decorated in a similar expensive manner, was contained in the same receptacle.

From the contents of the chest, they could gain no clue to the residence of young Baldwin; but this omission was remedied on consulting the pocketbook, in which was found a letter from the boy to his father, dated from the house of a gentleman at Clapham, whose name Beresford recollected to be that of a clergyman, who was in the habit of taking a few pupils,

chiefly

chiefly the sons of persons of distinction, at a high salary. Expressing, therefore, his intention of immediately writing to his friend Delaval on the subject of his young charge, and getting him to take measures for having him safely sent down into the country, circumstances making it very inconvenient for himself so soon to revisit London, whence, after having fallen in so unexpectedly with sir Charles, he had not long been returned, the triumvirate retired to the parlour below, when Bagshaw expressed his astonishment at so little having been found in the strong-box of the deceased—"Since," said he, "it is but a very short time ago that my poor client had, to my own knowledge, lodged a much more considerable sum than we have been able to discover, in order to the laying it out on a mortgage which had been offered him, and which he afterwards declined, not liking the security; therefore, as it is very improbable that a man of his habits should so soon have made off with a sum of

of such magnitude, I am induced to suppose either that the money is still concealed somewhere on the premises, or else has been deposited in the hands of some banker, or other confidential person, for the purpose of profit or security."

This declaration of the solicitor's determined Beresford, who was still by no means sanguine on the subject, to renew the search; but after a considerable time spent in examining all possible, and some impossible places, no farther property of any kind could be brought to light, nor even a memorandum of such a sum having been disposed of in any way whatever; they were therefore obliged to conclude; either that the deceased had some private hiding-place for his wealth, which baffled all their attempts to discover it, or, what Beresford thought more likely, that in the transaction alluded to, Baldwin had only acted as agent to some other person, and that the money, not being his own, had, on the failure of the negociation, been returned

turned to his employer. Still it was remarkable that no receipt, or document of any description, existed in witness of the occurrence. As matters stood, nothing more could be done, than that the executor should take charge of the property found, agreeable to the will, a duplicate of which was in the box, and the latter was conveyed, for greater security, to Mr. Beresford's house in Appleton, while the little furniture and other effects of the deceased which remained, being turned into money, the cottage, by its owner's direction, was advertised, and in a short time let to a new tenant.

Sir Charles Delaval, on the receipt of his friend's letter, willingly charged himself with the execution of the request contained in it, and ordering his carriage to Clapham, was set down on the Common at the door of a handsome house, to which he was directed as the habitation of doctor Lemesurier. He found the doctor a person having very much the appearance of the gentleman, as well as of the polite scholar, an opinion he

was

was afterwards confirmed in by the manners and acquirements of his pupil, who was soon introduced to him.

Charles Baldwin was summoned from the playground, and shortly after made his *entré*. A fine open countenance, to which recent exercise had given a brilliant glow, a pair of animated hazel eyes darting glances, in which liveliness and good-humour were the predominant expression, an high-arched forehead shaded by glossy ringlets of dark brown hair, and a figure in which lightness and elegance were conjoined with certain indications which promised, when the stripling should shoot up into manhood, no inconsiderable share of personal strength, formed altogether a pleasing *tout-ensemble*, which at once surprised and delighted the good-natured general, who, simply requesting his company, as being a friend of his father's, did not break the melancholy intelligence of his parent's death to him till after their arrival in Brook-street, when the sensibility and distress he evinced on

the news being communicated to him in the most gentle manner possible, tended not a little to increase the interest and regard his host had from the first begun to feel and cherish towards him.

When the first ebullitions of the poor boy's grief, for the loss of the only parent that remained to him, had a little subsided, the baronet gave into his hands a letter which Beresford had enclosed to him for that purpose. It was couched in terms of the greatest kindness, and even affection, and after alluding to the unfortunate catastrophe, and mentioning the testament which consigned him to his care and protection, conveyed the strongest assurances of sympathy with his sorrows, and the most earnest wishes for their alleviation; conjuring him, in terms which proved the deep concern he took in his welfare, to consider him in every respect the representative of the father he had lost; and stating his eagerness to welcome him at once to his home and to his heart.

The

The kindness of this epistle, in which Beresford had neither attempted to lessen the magnitude of his loss, nor to offer affected and commonplace condolence on an event, the weight of which he knew was not to be lessened by sentimental declamation, or mawkish repetitions on the certainty of death, and the duty of resignation, made a deep impression on the amiable and feeling heart of his young *protégé*, whose grateful nature, ever accessible to the least shadow of kindness or regard, already turned to Beresford, whom he now considered as his only friend, with sentiments of affection, which made him forget that he had seen very little of that gentleman, and that little at a very early period of his life; a gleam of sunshine scatters tenfold radiance, and is ten times as genial, in a chill and dreary season, and kindness is ever most grateful, most soothing, in calamity.

Nor was this favourable impression lessened, when in a few days he accompanied the

the baronet's family to Appleton, and was received with open arms by him whom obedience to his father's will, as well as inclination, now taught him to consider as the director of his future pursuits, and, in some measure, the arbiter of his destiny.

During the whole of his journey down, he had occupied himself in retracing the faint recollections his memory retained of the person and manners of his new guardian, and his reminiscences, though vague, were of a satisfactory nature; nor was he disappointed, when, on his arrival, a rather elderly and gentlemanly-looking man, with a mild and somewhat pensive countenance, over which, on his introduction, a secret and undefined feeling seemed to cast a momentary hectic, welcomed him to Appleton by the title of his adopted son.

The personal appearance of his youthful ward made an impression no less favourable on the mind of Beresford, as he viewed, with a glance of pity amounting almost to despondency in its expression, the manly

yet

yet modest demeanour of the handsome youth, and the spirited yet subdued energy that characterized his whole deportment. A tear rose to his eye, and a degree of inward agitation shook his whole frame, as he pressed him to his bosom, and inwardly vowed to dedicate his utmost faculties and exertions to the happiness of the orphan thrown upon his care, and his success and advancement in the world. Moved as it were by an instinctive feeling of reciprocal regard, Baldwin accompanied him from the mansion of the baronet to that habitation which was now become his home, and which did not appear the less agreeable to him, when he found that both it and the affections of its owner were to be shared by him with an elegant well-formed girl, little older than himself, the daughter of his benevolent protector.

Mary Beresford was indeed an object well calculated to excite the liveliest emotions in the ardent imagination of a lad of seventeen. If her features, taken separately,

rately, were not regularly beautiful, their combination produced the happiest effect; her complexion was singularly clear and transparent, and derived additional brilliancy from a profusion of beautiful dark locks, which wantoned over her fair brow in unstudied simplicity. Her eyes, shaded by their long raven-coloured lashes, possessed all the mildness of her father's, yet exhibited at times an expression of archness, which gave a peculiar grace to the contour of her countenance; her mouth was well formed, and her teeth remarkably fine; and cold and sullen indeed must that bosom have been which could resist the magic of her smile.

Charles Baldwin, at all events, was not one by whom so pleasing a combination of charms would have passed unappreciated, and very short was the period spent in her society, ere the thorough good-humour, which marked her every word and action, and the sterling value, rather than the brilliant display, of her mental graces, natural

and acquired, completed the subjugation her personal beauty had begun, and laid in his yet inexperienced heart the foundation of an affection, which time and circumstances ever after failed to obliterate.

The first few days after his domestication in the family were passed by him in melancholy retrospection and regret. Accompanied by his guardian, he had visited the scene which witnessed the last sigh of his expiring parent, as well as the cottage which had so long afforded him a shelter, and which had also been the site of his own earliest pastimes and employments; the lawn, the scene of his boyish sports, the little garden, the poplars which had screened him from the sun, were still there, green and flourishing as in his infancy; the bubbling brook yet glittered as of yore in the noontide ray; but the eye that had watched his gambols was closed—the heart that had beat in unison with every joy or trouble of his childhood, was cold and still for ever. He had heard with astonish-

ment,

ment, not unmingled with a keen sensation of disappointment, the story of his father's defalcation in pecuniary matters, and the consequent limited extent of his own resources. This was a blow which fell the heavier upon him, as, from the constant and undeviating tenor of his father's letters and discourse, he had been induced to suppose himself the heir of an affluent, if not an enormously-wealthy man. The pittance therefore which remained, for such comparatively it appeared to him, from the exaggerated nature of his prior expectations, seemed only a trifle barely adequate to the mere purposes of existence.

On the mind of youth, however, more especially on that of a youth who, from from unbounded indulgence, and having never known the want of it, could scarcely be said to be acquainted with the value of money, a disappointment of this sort in general leaves, after the first surprise, but a very slight impression, at least till the inconvenience comes to be felt; and it

would

would be injustice to Baldwin not to declare, that all unpleasant feelings arising from this circumstance, were entirely swallowed up in the more poignant emotions of grief, which he experienced for the fate of one who had ever been to him the kindest and most indulgent of parents; and whom he had always been accustomed to consider as the only tie which bound him to the world.

By degrees, however, the unremitting attentions of his new friend, and still more the unceasing endeavours of the fair Mary to amuse his mind, and ameliorate his sorrows, began not wholly to fail of the desired effect. The susceptible and grateful heart of the young mourner could not long resist the efforts of sympathizing regard to sooth and alleviate his distress; and after a few days spent in the retirement of his chamber, or seclusion with the family of his guardian, the buoyant spirits of youth once more began in some degree to resume their dominion; and he at length consent-

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ed, with less reluctance than, a few days before, he would have supposed possible, to be introduced to some of the neighbouring gentlemen previous to his matriculation at Oxford, in which university Mr. Beresford had proposed his taking up his residence, for the purpose of completing an education already excellent as far as it went. With this view, after a few faint objections, which were easily overruled, he at length agreed to attend his lovely companion, with whom he became every day more and more enamoured, to pay a visit of curiosity, among other engagements, to the much-celebrated museum of the reverend Josiah Drybone, D. D., F. S. A., and A. S. S.

CHAPTER VI.

'Tis very antique, sir; this habit once belonged to the celebrated Claudius Ptolemæus, who lived in the year one hundred and thirty-five. Mrs. Centlivre.

The rectorial house at Appleton was a large irregular pile of building, giving evident tokens of having, in a darker age than the present, constituted a part of one of those monastic establishments which were dissolved, on account of the immorality of their inhabitants, by that pious pattern for sovereigns, Henry the Eighth—I say, on account of their immorality, as it would be ridiculous to suppose that worthy and august monarch, who (if we except a trifling irritability of temper, and a venial propensity to cutting off ladies' heads, and all have their weaknesses) was as respectable a housekeeper as any within the bills of

of mortality, could be at all influenced by the desire of appropriating to his own use sundry pairs of silver candlesticks and their appending snuffers, together with various plates, dishes, and ewers (to say nothing of soup-ladles and gravy-spoons), all composed of the same precious metal, the accumulated offerings of ages—a circumstance which some grave historians have, absurdly e-nough, insinuated. No, doubtless it was no-thing else but the abandoned practices, and disgraceful profligacy, of these flagitious communities, which induced the defender of the faith to send them packing. What-ever was the motive, the action was indis-putable, and the ejected fraternity of the collegiate church of Appleton retired to make way for the more virtuous followers of sir Hildebrand Stapylton, a courtier who had contrived to win a considerable sum of money of his sovereign at primero.

The illustrious offspring of the united houses of York and Lancaster had but two modes of paying his debts of honour;

one was by attainting and executing the creditor, which liquidated all demands; the other, less sanguinary, and much more satisfactory to the winner, by a grant of the confiscated lands and property of the church. Stapylton was lucky enough to get his "little account" settled in the latter way, and in his and his son's possession the priory, after undergoing alterations sufficient to render it a comfortable residence for a gentleman of the sixteenth century, remained till 1586, when its then owner, being implicated in Babington's conspiracy, was executed with him, and five more of his companions; and his estates falling by forfeiture to the crown, the mansion soon after became, under the Protestant denomination of parsonage, once more the property of the church.

Like many edifices of the same description, it still retained a strong assimilation to the cloister, in spite of all the various tastes and efforts of different incumbents, by whom it had been successively "repaired and

and beautified." Half-a-dozen stairs, where one would have sufficed, still led to long galleries and lofty narrow rooms, from whose high and arched windows the antique casement, to make way for the less inconvenient but incongruous modern sash, the small portion of light, even now admitted by which, rendered it difficult to conceive how, under the ancient system, our worthy ancestors had been able to find their way from one room to another without the assistance of a candle. Into an apartment of this description the party was ushered on the appointed Thursday, when the accumulated treasures of antiquity were to be exposed to their admiring eyes by their erudite and scientific collector.

The doctor, clad in a stiff mazarine morning-gown, and a cap of green velvet, of the true virtuoso cut, a little the worse for wear, upon his head, received his company with ill-concealed exultation, and after the customary compliments, led the

way in scarcely-suppressed triumph, to what, with affected modesty, he called his "little collection." A long table in the centre of the room contained a series of glass-cases in a double row, not dissimilar in size and shape to those which ornament the interior of Exeter 'Change, each of which exhibited to view a number of moths and butterflies, pieces of spar, and a few trumpery specimens of mineralogy, with a parcel of dried sea-weed, and a variety of shells disposed in different figures; while the well-furnished sides of the apartment were covered with articles of a more rare and precious nature, which their elated owner now hastened to enumerate and describe.

The first object to which he directed their attention, was a large stuffed alligator, which he had lately received from Liverpool, a present from a distant relation engaged in the slave trade, who, wishing to stand well in the good graces of his wealthy cousin (well knowing that he neither

had,

had, nor was likely to have, any children of his own), had brought the animal home from Africa for him; nor could he have taken a better method of paying his court to the doctor, who immediately had his new acquisition stretched upon an iron bar, placed for that purpose over the entrance, in which situation it caught the eye of Mrs. Gruby, who pointed it out to the eye of her son, master Octavius Gruby, and, with much self-complacency, pronounced it to be "a remarkably-fine whale." Trevanion, who was standing at her elbow, highly applauded the accuracy of her judgment, at the same time paying many compliments to her taste, and declaring his conviction of her being a first-rate *connoisseur*, especially in whales, when he was interrupted by the doctor, who assured his attentive auditress, that the object of her regard, though certainly a very fine one of the species, was not absolutely a fish; but an "alligator, my dear madam, an amphibious animal found in most of the great

river in Africa, and brought in the present instance from the banks of the Niger."

The good lady could not help feeling a little abashed at this declaration, and darting a petrifying glance at her old enemy, the curate, who she now perceived had been what is vulgarly called "quizzing" her, moved away in dignified silence, and retired to the other side of the doctor, placing him between herself and her old tormentor, whom she did not again deign to address the whole morning.

The next article exhibited was an old-fashioned broad-brimmed hat, bound with red ribbon, and much discoloured, either by dust or age, one side of which was flapped up in the Spanish fashion, while the crown bore a strong resemblance to a huge extinguisher; this their *Cicerone* averred was a great curiosity, and calculated to throw a considerable light on an obscure portion of English history, being, in point of fact, the individual hat formerly worn by the celebrated Aga-

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tha Sonthiel, of Knaresborough, in Yorkshire, better known, perhaps, by the more familiar appellation of mother Shipton, who flourished about the latter end of the sixteenth century, proving, beyond a doubt, that the steeple-crowned hat was not, as asserted by the learned doctor Shuffletaile, invariably vandyked and trimmed with a binding of Kendal green.

Trevanion here ventured to inquire if it were not possible that the cherry-coloured ornaments might be the spurious interpolation of a later age; but this suggestion was indignantly repelled by the doctor, who affirmed it to be not more certain that the *chapeau* in question had been actually the property of the said Agatha (by Shuffletaile falsely styled Ursula) Sonthiel, otherwise Shipton, than that it had descended in an entire, genuine, and unadulterated state to the gentleman from whom he had purchased it, at a sum infinitely below its real value, being little more than

double the price of a fashionable beaver in the shop (we beg pardon—*emporium)* of Messrs. Hawkes and Mosely.

Trevanion, as in duty bound, received with implicit deference the declaration of his rector, thinking it by no means improbable that the authority for the primitive colour of the ribbons might indeed be equally well-established with the proofs of the identity of the habiliment itself, and advanced to join Miss Beresford, who, with Baldwin, was examining eagerly a very handsome Etruscan vase, which, with several more of inferior size and beauty, filled up the recess of one of the high Gothic windows of the apartment.

The elegant simplicity of its form, the lightness of its appearance, and the beauty of its proportions, rendered it indeed a most pleasing object of contemplation, and a delightful specimen of ancient art: of course, it did not fail to receive from the company the admiration it really deserved, and was so well calculated to elicit,

elicit, when, in answer to a question from Miss Letitia, who had contrived to get as close to the curate as if she were speculating rather on the possibility of creeping into his pocket than his heart, their host replied, "that he had procured the vase, together with the other specimens of antique pottery which accompanied it, from a friend, a Mr. Anderson, who being at the court of the king of Naples, in the suite of the late sir William Hamilton, was present when it was dug up at Herculaneum."

"*Dug up*, doctor Drybone!" cried Mrs. Gruby, who had been minutely inspecting it; "do you mean to say that your friend, Mr. Thingumee, actually saw it dug up himself?"

"He did most certainly, my dear ma'am, and I have often heard him express the terror he was in, lest the awkwardness of the labourers, in raising it to the surface, might have defaced, or even totally destroyed, so beautiful a relic of antiquity."

"Why sure-*ly*," (laying a very strong

emphasis on the last syllable), sure-*ly*, doctor, you never can mean that it was dug up out of the ground?"

"Out of the ground!—undoubtedly, madam."

"What! just as it is now?"

"Except that some pains were certainly taken in cleaning it, and removing the incrustation of mould which partially obscured its beauties, exactly in the state you now behold it."

It is difficult to say whether astonishment or incredulity was the preponderating trait in the expression of Mrs. Gruby's countenance, at hearing what she considered as so very extraordinary an account, laid down in such decisive, and truth obliges us to add, somewhat indignant, tones by the learned antiquary, who could not help beginning to suspect that the lady entertained an intention of throwing doubts on the authenticity of his darling vase. The contrast indeed exhibited in their various features formed to some of the

the observers no inconsiderable share of the morning's amusement. The half-surprised, half-angry elevation of the doctor's eyebrows, and the faint hectic that forced its way through the sallow shades of his complexion; the open mouth and amazed air of the fair querist; the heavy unmeaning orbs, and round, fat, chubby, cherubimical face, with about as much expression in it as a muffin, of master Octavius Gruby, who listened to his mamma's interrogations, and her respondent's replies, with much such apparent interest as a senior fellow exhibits at the reading of a Greek theme in hall at dinner-time, would have formed no bad subject for the pencil of a Gilray or a Rowlandson.

" Vell, doctor!" at length exclaimed the lady, finding words, after an hesitation resembling that agonizing pause which takes place when a spoiled child is inhaling a sufficient quantity of breath to give vent to a scream of more than common energy, her wonder now merging at once

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in scepticism—"vell, if you are such a *ninkum* as to believe him, you shall never persuade me that nobody ever dug up ready-made pots out of the ground—no, no, I knows better than that comes to, at all ewents."

It would be a hard task to describe the amazement portrayed in the features of the learned doctor, at this open avowal of the existence and the grounds of the good lady's incredulity, while an ill-suppressed titter communicated itself, with epidemical velocity, to the rest of the circle. His countenance, however, rapidly altered to the settled expression of angry contempt, and he would probably have administered a very severe rebuke to the matron who was now openly triumphing in all the pride of superior sagacity, had not Miss Beresford, who saw with concern the rising storm, diverted its fury by directing his attention to another article in the collection.—"Pray, doctor," exclaimed she, pointing with the end of her parasol to a quart bottle, which occupied

occupied a conspicuous place on one of the shelves, "what have you got in that bottle? the inscription on the label is in so fine a character, that I am unable at this distance to decipher it."

"That, madam," interrupted sir Charles, who, with lady Delaval on his arm, had hitherto remained rather in the background, "is doubtless some *bonne bouche*, some exquisitely rare and delicious *liqueur*, infinitely superior to any modern production of the grape, before whose matchless qualities imperial Tokay itself must hide its diminished head, and even champagne punch sink into insignificance."

"On my word," cried Trevanion, "sir Charles has certainly hit it, and the doctor intends to treat the ladies from that invaluable flask with a draught of the Olympian nectar of the immortals, a glass of the true Falernian from Horace's cellar, or indulge them with a sip from what may probably have once afforded comfort to

Mark

Mark Anthony himself, in the capacity of Cleopatra's cherry-brandy bottle."

"No, indeed, gentlemen," replied the doctor, reaching down the object of their remarks from its situation, and holding it up to the light, "this vessel has not to boast of such high antiquity, neither are its contents altogether adapted to the purposes of compotation; this article is nevertheless intimately connected with an important period of English history, and must ever be viewed with respect, if not veneration, as being one of the last remains of expatriated royalty. I need scarcely add, that I allude to the unfortunate house of Stuart, a family not to be paralleled in the history of the world, for the variety and extent of their misfortunes, and the melancholy and untimely ends of most of those personages who, under that appellation, swayed for so many generations the sceptre of Scotland, and latterly our own."

"While

"While I admit the fatality which seems to have hung over that devoted family, still we cannot conceal it from ourselves," replied sir Charles, "that the imprudencies, to give them no harsher a name, of those misguided monarchs, were at least equal to their calamities, and indeed the primary cause of most of their afflictions: but, to wave the discussion of a point on which wiser heads than ours have differed, I am at a loss to know, doctor, how the article in your hand, which I protest I should take for nothing either more or less than a bottle of water, can in any way tend to elucidate the momentous era of the revolution; for such, I think, you hinted was the case."

"Pardon me, my dear sir Charles—you have misconceived me: this treasure, for such I esteem it, is indeed unable to throw any new light upon the intrigues of the period to which you allude; it is merely valuable, as I before stated, when considered as a relic; worthless in itself, it derives

rives an adventitious degree of consequence from the great names with which it is connected. I need scarcely recall it to the recollection of the company, that the misguided James, seeing the whole nation was prepared to side with the prince of Orange, abandoned an army on whose allegiance he could no longer rely, and disguising his person in mean habiliments, attended only by the earl of Peterborough and sir Edward Hales, took horse, and in the middle of a dark tempestuous night arrived at Faversham, on the fourteenth of November 1688, a year remarkable in history both as the epoch of our glorious constitution, and the mayoralty of the great Emanuel Drybone, my revered grandfather, who then filled the civic chair in that ancient and venerable corporation. Hastening, in spite of the unfavourable state of the elements, to embark on board a small vessel then waiting for him in the river, the fugitive monarch was seized by some fishermen, under the mistaken

mistaken idea of his being a Jesuit attempting to escape from the kingdom, and forcibly reconducted to the town, where he was secured for the remainder of the night in the common jail. The following morning his majesty was conducted into the presence of my respected ancestor, to whom, however reluctantly, he was obliged to reveal his rank and quality. The ideas of my worthy progenitor were not a little confused at this discovery, as the state of politics was at this time by no means so decided, but what a clearer-sighted man than his worship might fail to see his way, especially as, in point of disposition, he bore no slight resemblance to a reverend member of the church, at that time the respected incumbent of the vicarage of Bray. King James himself could not have cursed the interfering boobies who laid an embargo upon him more heartily than did Emanuel Drybone for bringing him into this dilemma. In order, however, to avoid, as much as possible, offending

offending either party, he immediately dispatched a courier express to Whitehall, and at the same time most humbly and dutifully insisted on accommodating his majesty with his own house. If my grandfather devoutly wished the officious blockheads who retarded the king's departure at the devil, it was soon evident that the sentiments of greater people than my grandfather were in perfect unison with his own; and as, when, the following morning, four coaches, attended by a suitable number of Dutch guards, arrived from the metropolis to convey his illustrious guest to London, not the slightest notice was taken of his own zeal by the government, nor even the honour of knighthood, which, at least in his own opinion, his services demanded, was so much as hinted at (his unfortunate sovereign moreover graciously giving him his hand to kiss at parting, in acknowledgment of his attentions as a host), it is upon the whole no wonder that my grandfather, in all the pride of consci-

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ous worth and slighted merit, became from that moment a staunch Jacobite, and in the course of his examination of the chamber his illustrious visitor had occupied, and which he eagerly surveyed, with the hope of finding something, though but a stray shoestring, or supernumerary button, which might serve as a memorial of the honour his house had enjoyed, happening to discover that a certain little article of domestic economy yet retained a portion of royal superfluity, the mayor, yielding to the enthusiasm of his newly-awakened loyalty, eagerly secured the invaluable treasure in the bottle you behold, carefully corking and hermetically sealing it with his own hands."

This unsuspected *dénouement* of the doctor's prolix account created some few symptoms of confusion among the ladies, who, not being altogether such great *connoisseurs*, nor so well versed in *virtú*, as lady —— or Mrs. ——, found it impossible to repress a slight suffusion of countenance

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at the contemplation of this "great curiosity," at which not one of them ventured to cast a second glance; nor did the gentlemen find themselves in a less awkward predicament, their risible muscles being so forcibly affected by this very extraordinary specimen of antiquarian research, as to render it difficult in the extreme for them to preserve the due proportion of gravity requisite to carry them through the remainder of the exhibition with tolerable propriety.

From this dilemma blind Fortune, who bestows, with a much more impartial hand than is generally imagined, the agreeables and disagreeables of life, for once kindly interposed to rescue them. The ears of the company, as well as of the doctor, who, quite absorbed in his subject, was perfectly unconscious of the sensations he had excited, was proceeding, with infinite *naïveté*, to relate the care taken by his ancestor that so inestimable a jewel should descend genuine and unadulterated to posterity, with

with a slight digression on a new method of making sealing-wax, were suddenly invaded by a tremendous crash, which at once broke the thread of his discourse, and electrified the assembly.

To account for this interruption, it will be necessary to trace the progress of master Octavius Gruby, who, during the preceding exposition, feeling but little interested in the fate of James the Second (with whose name he was about as much acquainted as with that of the reigning Grand Llama of Thibet), had, early in the discussion, withdrawn his attention from the consideration of that monarch's personals, and dexterously extricating his hand from the pressure of maternal confinement, had proceeded to make a solitary tour of the apartment, occasionally stopping to indulge his optics with a view of the aforesaid butterflies, whose gaudy colours, as they stood with the wings extended and crucified upon large pieces of cork, afforded objects infinitely more at-

tractive

tractive to him than a whole aqueduct of what was then undergoing the inspection of the more enlightened part of the company. By degrees, however, he deviated a little from the centrical table that supported the glass cases, which, being secured by locks, had more than once occasioned him much chagrin, by the resistance they opposed to his satisfying himself by the touch of the actual existence of the beautiful insects he was contemplating, and convincing himself that their appearance was not altogether a *deceptio visûs*, when his eye was strongly attracted by the figure of a stuffed humming-bird perched upon its nest on a shelf opposite, whose unprotected situation seemed to offer no impediment to his submitting it to manual research. Indeed this natural (a foreigner perhaps would say national) propensity to *handle*, may generally be remarked in young gentlemen who are endowed with genius and an inquisitive turn of mind; nor are, in my opinion, those persons

sons (the hanging committee of the royal exhibition at Somerset House, for instance, as well as many proprietors of private collections) at all to be commended, who, by requiring a deposition of walking-sticks and parasols previous to the entering their show-rooms, give so dispiriting a check to the energy of youthful investigation. Nevertheless our polite neighbours over the water, who have frequently animadverted on this propensity of ours, are the last persons in the world, as being by no means less inclined to scepticism in general, who ought to have taken notice of it: —but this by-the-bye.

Master Octavius, actuated by a strong and laudable thirst for information, was ever particularly solicitous to submit whatever article gave pleasure to his eyes to the less fallible ordeal of his finger and thumb, and observing the rest of the company entirely taken up in listening to doctor Drybone's harangue at the other end of the room, he began, by cautiously pla-

cing one foot upon one of the lower shelves, and holding with a most tenacious grasp another about a foot above his head, to raise himself to such a pitch of elevation as would bring the object he had in view within his reach. Unfortunately for his attempt, the consistency and strength of the ladder he had selected were but ill-calculated to sustain the weight of its burthen, and consequently, by a rapid and deplorable anticlimax, master Gruby found himself on a sudden seated on the floor of the apartment, surrounded by the "wreck of matter" which he had drawn down with him in his fall; and that too without the melancholy satisfaction of having secured the prize which had excited his ambition. Direfully indeed did the noise of his descent operate upon the *tympanum* of doctor Drybone, nor were his nerves at all more composed, when, amidst the chaos which surrounded this youthful *Phaëton*, the shattered remains of what was once the identical lanthorn used by Guido Vaux

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in his nefarious attempt to blow up King, Lords, and Commons, in parliament assembled, met his agonized gaze! Nay, worse than all, his dearest treasure, the idolized object of his soul, the apple of his eye, the very rarity which had given rise to this inauspicious meeting, the inestimable ever-burning lamp of Albertus the Rosicrucian, lay before him fractured, crushed, pulverized, scattered over the ground in innumerable fragments, and to all intents and purposes as completely deprived of existence as the sage Stenkenbrüch himself!

The various modes in which excessive grief manifests itself in different persons, or rather, the discrepancy of appearance which the same passion exhibits, when felt in different degrees, was never more strikingly portrayed even by the pencil of Le Brun himself, than as it now appeared in the countenances of the two unfortunate sufferers by the present disaster. The

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young delinquent, frightened almost out of his life by the rapidity of his tumble, and the confusion which accompanied it, seriously inconvenienced by the contusion that part of him which met the ground first had already experienced, and, perhaps, anticipating a still severer attack upon the same quarter, in recompence for the mischief he had done, stretched a mouth, by no means of the smallest, to the utmost extent of its dimensions, and gave utterance to a long-protracted and most appalling yell, that would have done honour to a Catabaw; while the hapless antiquarian stood petrified, senseless, almost annihilated, his faculties totally benumbed and paralysed by the magnitude of his misfortune; a cold dew that stood upon his brow, and the tremulous motion of his under-lip, alone announced that despair had not yet terminated his miserable existence. He stood like Macduff, who, when overwhelmed by a calamity almost as great

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(the murder of his wife and children), is addressed by his commiserating prince—

> "What, man! ne'er pull your hat upon your brows;
> Give sorrow vent! the grief that does not speak
> Whispers the o'erfraught heart, and bids it break."

A deep and agonized groan at length happily relieved the tension human nature could not long have endured, and sinking on a chair, the bereaved sufferer lost for a time all consciousness of his wretchedness in a happy insensibility; in which state, by the assistance of Trevanion and the servants, he was conveyed to bed, and Mr. Jordan hastily summoned to attend him, who, after taking sixteen ounces of blood from his arm, and administering a composing specific of his own, ventured to give his afflicted sister some hopes that he might survive the shock; while the party, thus disagreeably interrupted, broke up, and retired to their several habitations; Mrs. Gruby alternately scolding and comforting the unlucky culprit, whose

eagerness in penetrating into the depths of natural philosophy had met, in its very outset, with a rebuff so little encouraging to the endeavours of a young beginner.

CHAPTER VII.



When Paridel tries in the dance
Any favour with Phyllis to find,
Oh! how with one trivial glance
Might she ruin the peace of my mind!

In ringlets he dresses his hair,
And his crook is bestudded around;
And his pipe—oh! may Phyllis beware
Of a magic there is in the sound!

SHENSTONE.

TIME, in the society of Charles's new friends, the Beresfords, flew unheeded; and though a tender recollection of his deceased parent still remained, and would oftentimes, in the solitude of his apartment, draw tears of regret down the cheeks of our hero, who had certainly entertained a very strong degree of affection for his father, yet the natural elasticity of his

 mind

mind soon restored him to composure, and even to some degree of cheerfulness.

The period was now fast approaching, when, according to his guardian's arrangements, Baldwin was to accompany him, in order to take up his residence at the university—an intention which was to be put in practice at the commencement of the term ensuing.

In the meanwhile, occupied in alternately riding and walking with the fascinating Mary, who had already made so strong an impression upon his heart, or reading aloud the work of some favourite poet, while she employed herself with her needle or crayons, when the weather was too unfavourable to admit of their venturing into the air, or when the shades of evening had induced the family to avail themselves of the cheerful comforts of a sea-coal fire, he seemed to wish for no greater happiness than the certainty of being near her, and the consciousness of existing in her presence.

Did

Did Mary walk to the window, and eye the clouds, in doubtful reverie as to the probable serenity of the atmosphere, Charles was instantly at her side, with the most unhesitating prognostications of a fine day; and if, in spite of the augury, an ill-natured shower would sometimes intervene, and evince the fallacy of the prediction, his was the hand to extend the ever-ready umbrella over her head, and his the arm to assist her in her meandering deviations to avoid the sudden accumulations of water in the more direct path. Always ready at her side, he was constantly prepared to disentangle a puzzling skein of silk, or restore a dilapsed needle, and to perform all those important little offices of gallantry, which form so large a portion of the items in Cupid's catalogue.

These symptoms of attachment were neither overlooked nor disregarded by the observant eye of Mr. Beresford; he took, however, no methods to obstruct or discourage his juvenile passion; he rather ap-

 peared,

peared, or at least so Mary imagined, to contrive opportunities for their being together, and always listened with approbation to the proposal of any little excursion or engagement which would necessarily be the means of their spending a portion of their time in each other's company, unchecked by the observation of himself or others.

There were times when his manner was surprising and even inexplicable to Baldwin; occasionally he would contemplate him with a melancholy tenderness of regard, while some internal emotion would agitate his features to a degree which almost gave rise to a suspicion in his young breast, that some feeling more powerful than the mere remembrance of his deceased father, or the recollection of his own orphan state, could alone excite in the bosom of his guardian.

More than once, too, Charles was convinced that he had seen the tear-drop glistening in his eye, as, with a smothered sigh, he

he turned from his inquiring gaze; at other times his brow would contract, and his looks assume a sternness as he met his glance, that no expression of his lips ever corresponded to.

Such intervals of spleen, however, were rare in their occurrence, and brief in their duration, while the never-varying benignity of his address, and the kind and consoling interest with which he ever listened to his projects for the future, or endeavoured to render the present agreeable to him, soon dissipated from Charles's mind any little momentary uneasiness he might experience, when the passing cloud overshadowed a countenance which otherwise was wont to beam on him with the warmest rays of sympathy and benevolence. The recollection, too, that the being who thus fostered and protected him, was the parent of her, to give pleasure to whom he would have deemed no sacrifice too great, no privation too severe, had its share in producing so powerful an operation in

 his

his mind, that in a short time poor Charles had almost transferred the filial affection he had felt for his father to the person of his representative.

Two circumstances only occurred to damp the ardour of his feelings, and affect him with something nearly allied to discontent; one was, that he could not help fancying, at times, that the behaviour of Mary, although she ever treated him with even distinguished attention, and had always a smile ready to reward his little exertions in her service, was not exactly what he could have wished it to be; he could not (though there were moments when he almost thought he could) distinguish any great increase of suavity in that smile, when directed to himself, from what it contained when others in similar circumstances drew it forth. This was a very sore subject with poor Charles, who, in all the enthusiasm of a first love, thought every relaxation of feature, accompanied with a glance of amenity, bestowed by his adored

adored upon another, as little less than an actual robbery of what he considered the most valuable of his possessions.

Another grievance (and a most intolerable one it was) annoyed him for the time even more than the one above mentioned. Notwithstanding all his care and adroitness, it would sometimes happen, that at the little parties and routs which they occasionally attended, Trevanion would contrive to forestall him in the envied chair which adjoined the one Miss Beresford occupied; or, what was nearly as bad, get prior possession of the shawl or mantle which was to envelop her graceful form on her return, and, of course, go through all the important ceremonies of adjusting wrapping, &c. which he began to consider as peculiarly his own perquisite. Nay, he now and then imagined (but surely he must have been mistaken) that the fair Mary rather favoured the intrusive advances of the curate; certain it was, she neither expressed, nor seemed to feel, any

repugnance

repugnance at the success of his manœuvres; and when this idea took possession of his mind, as sleepless a night as any young gentleman in love could possibly pass at his age (that is to say, he would lie awake almost an hour after he got into bed), was generally the consequence, and some little mixture of resentment toward the lady would probably influence his behaviour, till the first half of his muffin was dispatched at breakfast the next morning. But it was not in nature for any human being to remain long angry with Mary Beresford, and these little fits of spleen and disappointment never failed to vanish before the magic of her eye, and the soft intonation of her voice, long before the repast concluded.

In regard to his fancied rival, the presumptuous curate, the case was widely different; although Trevanion was a young man, whose manners and address would rarely fail to conciliate any one of either sex, who was not previously strongly prepossessed

possessed against him, nevertheless his tall and commanding figure, elegance of deportment, and open animated countenance, were entirely lost upon Charles, or, rather, formed additional articles in the list of high crimes and misdemeanours, of which he stood convicted to him; and, long before a more than usually severe winter had relaxed the icy grasp in which it had held all animate and inanimate nature, could Charles's wishes have placed him in the situation he desired, the curate would have had no great reason to complain of cold.

Truth obliges us to add, that there were some others, among whom our friend Mrs. Gruby stood pre-eminent, who would not perhaps have felt any violent degree of concern, had this gentleman been consigned to a warm bath in the fiery Phlegethon. In fact, although accompanied with a considerable portion of good-nature, which, in his cooler moments, was always strong enough to counteract the utterance of any

observation

observation which might give pain to any human being, Trevanion's great fault was a strong propensity to satire; and as young men of five-and-twenty are not usually proverbial for their discretion, the too-free exercise of this dangerous talent had raised him many enemies among those who had been, or feared they might be, the objects of his raillery.

Another infallible consequence of a reputation of this kind attended him. Did any stupid lampoon, or absurd piece of scurrility, make its appearance in the neighbourhood, he was ever sure to be pointed out by the finger of ignorance or malignity as its author; and though perfectly conscious, that never did any line escape his pen, which a gentleman might blush to own, or a good-natured man indite, still there were many, who, from ignorance of his character and disposition, scrupled not to believe the calumnies which he frequently was too proud and too indignant to contradict.

But

But from this unfortunate predisposition, on the part of Charles, to consider him in the light of a pretender to the affections of his beloved Mary, no person in the world was perhaps, from congeniality of disposition, more likely, or more fitted, to become the friend of Baldwin, who had himself an ear for poetry, and a knack at versifying, in which glorious art, if he made no great progress, he yet soared a little above the flights of a poet of our own days, who, after five months spent in courting the muses, tells us that he at last succeeded no farther than in the parturition of a couplet, in which "thumping" rhymed to "dumpling."

As a slight specimen of our hero's style of composition, we may be excused perhaps for inserting a few lines, written during one of his excursions with Miss Beresford among the picturesque scenery of the neighbourhood, which we are induced to select, in preference to many others of a

more

more amatory cast, from the important consideration of their brevity.

LINES TO ECHO.

WRITTEN IN **** **** PARK.

Though still unseen, coy, fleeting maid,
Thine airy dwelling must be near;
Thy tones, responsive through the glade,
In sounds melodious meet mine ear.

These green retreats embowering prove
Sacred to Contemplation's eye,
Whilst thou returnest through the grove,
The cry of woe, or note of joy.

Shepherds, beware! though lengthening shade,
Though evening veil the dewy plain,
Speak softly! here abides a maid
Telling your amorous tales again!

Notwithstanding the involuntary dislike which Charles could not help entertaining towards Trevanion, he suffered not a feeling so unprovoked, and which at times

times he was almost ashamed of, to appear in the intercourse which took place between them; and the unconscious curate felt pleased with his company, though he could have occasionally dispensed with it, when it proved, as was continually the case, the sole impediment to his enjoying a *tête-à-tête* with the object of their mutual regard. . . .

The time at length arrived, when Charles was to make his *début* on the stage of that world in miniature, an university. The chaise was ordered, the last trunk corded, and Baldwin retired to his room, pressing to his heart half-a-dozen pair of cambric bands, the farewell present of his charmer, who had worked them for him with her own fair hands; her father, in the simplicity of his heart, having deemed those little appendages to be now, as heretofore, absolutely necessary for the respectable appearance of an under-graduate.

She had promised to make tea for the travellers in the morning. Charles, therefore,

fore, sought his couch; the only drawback on the prospect opening to his view being the idea of leaving his adored, for so long a time as the period which must intervene before the long vacation, exposed to the dangerous attentions and assiduities of the dreaded Trevanion.

CHAPTER VIII.

Inter sylvas academi quærere verum.

HORACE.

The sun had already reached its evening declination, when Mr. Beresford and his *protégé* arrived on the top of Hedington Hill. The loyal and learned city of Oxford, the resort of the wise, the asylum of the muses, the emporium of all that can excite the fancy, awake remembrance of the past, or stimulate to exertion for the future, lay beneath their feet. The last beams of the setting sun played faintly on its towers and pinnacles; and as they gradually sunk into the shades of twilight, left behind them a sensation, "pleasing, yet mournful to the soul." The beauty of the surrounding country, then budding forth

forth in all the exuberant verdure of a forward spring—the meandering Charwell—and the more majestic Isis—their green banks covered with the most luxuriant herbage, and their broad bosoms decked with many a light skiff or statelier yacht, whose white sails, hardly extended by the gentle breath of evening, scarcely seemed to move over the pure waters which sustained them, caused, at first sight, an emotion in the breast of the young student, as new and pleasing as it was unexpected.

His companion, who observed the joyous delirium in which he was wrapt, left him to the undisturbed enjoyment of sensations as delightful as they are fleeting, nor ever interrupted the reverie in which he was absorbed, till the chaise, having rolled over Magdalen Bridge, and traversed the finest street in Europe, drew up at length to the door of the Star inn.

Somewhat fatigued with their journey, the travellers, after a slight repast, retired early

to

to their beds; and the approaching change in his habits and manner of life, for the first time since the period of their leaving Appleton, ceased at length to occupy the mind of the young *débutant*, as he sunk into the soft embraces of the drowsy god. Steeped, however, as his senses were, in forgetfulness, queen Mab failed not to pay her accustomed visit, and, mounting on his pineal gland, exhibited to his diseased imagination her usual succession of incongruous images, among which the form of Mary Beresford, clad in a huge wig and trencher cap, made a very conspicuous figure.

The approach of morning dispersed those tormenting chimeras, and Charles joined his guardian at the breakfast-table, eager and impatient to enter upon his new situation; and having dispatched a hasty meal, accompanied him to the venerable walls of B—— College.

Mr. Holloway, the tutor, to whom Mr. Beresford had a particular recommenda-

tion,

tion, received his visitors with the utmost politeness; after briefly satisfying himself of his new pupil's proficiency in the dead languages, attended him to the vice-chancellor's, who gave him the necessary permission to suck his Alma Mater in the capacity of a commoner, and extract as much wisdom from her as he could contain.

Matters being thus placed upon a satisfactory footing, his companion, after seeing him settled in a comfortable set of rooms, and introduced to several of his fellow-collegians, to whom he gave a kind of inauguration dinner at the Star, left him to the cultivation of his new connexions, and retraced his way to Appleton, charged with abundance of remembrances and regards to his fair daughter.

Charles, in the society of his new friends, and in the contemplation of the architectural and other beauties of the place, found his time pass as swiftly, and almost as pleasantly, as in the woods and walks of Appleton;

Appleton; the alternate recurrence of study and relaxation added much to the improvement both of mind and body.

The college of which he was a member was remarkably strict in point of discipline, and justly celebrated for the figure its students made in the schools; nor was the young freshman a likely person to reflect discredit on it, as the rapid progress he made in the various sciences, joined to a degree of acquaintance with the languages cultivated in those "academic shades," by no means superficial, in a short time amply evinced.

It must be confessed, that a few irregularities would occasionally interfere with the generally-correct tenor of his conduct; a fine morning, and a rowing-match on the water, would sometimes traitorously induce him to "cut lecture;" and a violent headache, produced by the orgies of the preceding night, was at times the cause of a vacancy in his seat at morning chapel, and the jobation consequent upon so ne-

farious a proceeding; nay, it has been whispered, that on one occasion, two of the college lamps having been unfortunately fractured by a party at which he was a guest, he had the singular delight of seeing, on his breakfast-table, the next morning, a note, containing a most pressing request from the vice-principal, that he would be obliging enough to translate a couple of columns, in the newspaper of the day, into the sonorous harmony of Greek hexameters. Nevertheless, though the natural ebullition of strong animal spirits would at intervals betray him into these and similar disasters, the general tenor of his deportment was ever such as to secure him the approbation of the seniors, and the esteem and regard of his more juvenile companions.

Among the latter was a young man, about his own age, who came up to be matriculated the second term after his own admission, and who, from peculiar circumstances, and a want of native energy in his own

own character, became, in a great degree, thrown, as it were, on the humanity and protection of our hero.

Master Jacky Duddle was the only and the darling son of his mamma, the rich widow of the late alderman sir Jeremy Duddle, knight, citizen, and biscuit-baker, who, after having amassed a large fortune by contracts with government, for supplying the fleet with the commodity in which he dealt, expired suddenly at a corporation dinner, to the great grief of his disconsolate widow; this catastrophe being occasioned by suffocation, proceeding from the leg of a turkey, which stuck in his throat, in spite of the large quantity of oyster sauce with which the worthy alderman had previously taken great pains to lubricate the passage.

His death being so sudden and unexpected, had totally precluded the disposition of his property by testament—a task to which, like many others, he had always been very much averse. The bulk of his

 fortune,

fortune, in consequence, after deducting the widow's thirds, and a considerable sum secured to her by jointure, on her marriage, descended to his only offspring, master John, at that time not more than seven years of age.

'From the circumstance of his father's dying intestate, the boy was, of course, left entirely without guardians, and subject only to the control of his mother, who, possessing infinitely more affection for him than discretion in shewing it, performed so many works of supererogation, in evincing her maternal care and protection, that the poor child was literally almost killed with kindness; and, but for the repeated remonstrances of his paternal uncle, a wholesale druggist in Friday-street (who was a man of plain sound sense, and, what was infinitely more to the purpose, in lady Duddle's opinion, an old bachelor, of large unencumbered property, which she earnestly hoped might, at some future period, be transferred to the pockets of

of her darling), Jacky Duddle, in all probability, would have, long ere the age of puberty, fallen, like his father, a victim to the smallness of his swallow, or impeded powers of digestion.

Fortunately for the preservation of that illustrious family, thus threatened with extinction in the person of its immediate heir and representative, the reiterated attacks of uncle Barnaby at length so far prevailed with mamma, as to beget a sort of compromise. He was not to be sent to a public school—no, that was a thing not to be thought of for a moment! Poor dear! to be beat, and bruised, and knocked about by boys who were not possessed of a hundredth part of his *fortin;* and then to run the chance of catching cold, by not having his shirts and stockings properly aired; without any eggs or cold ham for breakfast; nor even perhaps so much as a warming-pan run over his sheets in cold weather; and his poor head plagued and tormented all day with nothing but books,

which he always hated the very sight of from an infant—no, indeed! if the dear boy must go to school (though, for her part, she did not see that much *larning* was necessary to teach a young man to spend a hundred and twenty thousand pounds), he should go to some genteel seminary near town, at Clapham, or Brompton, or Camberwell Grove, where she could get a comfortable residence close by, that the sweet child might come home to his meals, and to sleep, and not run the risk of his life from the carelessness of servants, or the want of proper and sufficient victuals.

In consequence of this determination, she at length authorized Mr. Barnaby Duddle to look out at once for a proper academy for her son, and a suitable residence for herself; both which he was fortunate enough to find in the immediate neighbourhood of Clapham. But here an unexpected difficulty occurred. Doctor Lemesurier, whose learning, abilities, and the

the distinguished kindness with which his pupils were treated, had been represented in the strongest terms by an intimate friend of both parties (so much so, indeed, that the widow had now set her heart on John's being placed under his care and tuition), positively refused to accede to the plan proposed, alleging, that, under such a system, he could not do justice to the lad himself; and that any innovation of the kind was perfectly inconsistent with his mode of proceeding, and the regulations to which his pupils invariably adhered.—"If," said he, "lady Duddle thinks proper to put sufficient confidence in me, to entrust me with the care of her son, it is a charge I will cheerfully undertake, and educate him to the best of my ability; but I cannot suffer the whole economy of my arrangements to be thrown into confusion, to say nothing of the inutility of any instructions of mine, when bestowed upon a boy who, one-half of his time, would be absent in person, and the

 other

other in mind, being naturally engrossed with the thoughts of returning home, as soon as he could contrive to blunder over his task."

Lady Duddle was much affected with the doctor's determination; but finding him resolute, and that he rejected, almost indignantly, the offer of an increased salary to come into her plans, she was at length forced to content herself with securing the house in question, where she could be with him at a moment's notice, and the enjoyment of her darling's company on Sundays, and on those days which were set apart by the doctor for the recreation of his pupils.

Here it was, that an acquaintance commenced between master Duddle and our hero, who sometimes accompanied him by invitation on those hebdomadal visits to his mamma, which she never failed strictly to require; and as the former, though completely a spoiled child, and excessively effeminate, was not, in other respects, an

an ill-tempered or ill-disposed lad, their acquaintance had ripened into something like intimacy, which the support and protection that Charles's robust and athletic make, combined with great firmness and intrepidity of character, enabled him to afford master Duddle, on sundry emergencies, in which their schoolfellows were concerned, tended not a little to promote.

This connexion, however, promiscuous as it appeared to be, was entirely broken off by our hero's abrupt removal from doctor Lemesurier's, and probably would never have been retained in after-life, in the recollection of either party, had not the same accident again brought them in contact on more classic ground.

Baldwin was seated, one morning, upon one of the chains which protected the angles of the grass-plot from unhallowed intrusion, just released from a pretty close examination of part of the Aristotelian philosophy—"*nescio quid meditans nugarum, et totus in illis,*" when his atten-

tion was forcibly attracted towards the porter's lodge, by sounds which, if not altogether harmonious, were at least somewhat familiar to his ears.

The voice, though harsh, was evidently that of a female, which pronounced, in a tone of authority—"Young man, where can I find the *missis* of this here college?"

"Who did you please to want, madam?" replied one of the most civil of the scouts, as he followed the speaker farther into the quadrangle, when Baldwin, raising his eyes, at once encountered the large grey orbs of lady Duddle, who, leaning on the shoulder of her son Jacky, had now made her *entré* within the gates.

The recognition, on either side, was instantaneous.—"Well, my goodness me! if this isn't *petickler fartinate!* Master Baldwin, how glad I be to see you! only to think how we were a-wishing for you all last night, and now you are the first thing we sees in the morning!"

"I am truly happy, madam," replied her auditor,

auditor, in a tone that a little belied the expression, "that fortune has so luckily thrown me in your way, more especially if, as I conclude may be the case, any little services of mine may be acceptable to one from whom I have received so much polite attention as I have met with from your ladyship."

To say the truth, our hero's tongue did not, in this instance, express exactly the sentiments of his heart; he was by no means delighted with the idea of officiating as Cicerone to, or, in the college phrase, *lionizing* her ladyship and her hopeful heir over the university—an employment which it required very little penetration to perceive was in imminent danger of falling to his share; in this idea he was the more confirmed, when his old schoolfellow, after also felicitating himself in eager terms on their opportune meeting, assured him, that immediately on their arrival, they had made numerous inquiries for him at the inn, in all which they had

been disappointed, from not knowing what college he was a member of; although doctor Lemesurier himself had informed them that he had, some time since, commenced his academic career—"But now," continued he, "you can at once tell mother where to go, and what to do, and all about it."

Charles certainly could have dispensed with this agreeable occupation, especially as he already saw several faces protruding from the neighbouring windows, busied in reconnoitering his friends; while three gentlemen-commoners, who were lounging in an opposite corner of the quad, were surveying them with marks of the most undisguised amusement, which met with additional food in the appearance of a third figure, in snuff-coloured habiliments, surmounted by a neat bob-wig, and bearing a gold-headed cane in his hand, who now advancing into line, was introduced to Baldwin by the style and title of "uncle Barnaby."

Notwithstanding

Notwithstanding all the horrors of his situation presented themselves at once to his mind's eye, Charles could not forget the many civilities and attentions he had received from lady Duddle, when the absence of his only parent had left him in that state of mental isolation which every schoolboy feels at times, when removed to a distance from all his friends and connexions, in spite of all the bustle and occupations of the scenes in which he is engaged, or the most attentive kindness on the part of his preceptors. School is still school, and an occasional visit to the house of a fellow-disciple, more fortunate in the vicinity of his parents, is always hailed as a joyful epoch in the age which separates the Midsummer from the Christmas holidays.

Several of these halcyon intervals had occurred to Charles while at Clapham; and he could not banish the recollection of them from his mind; ingratitude, or even the shadow of it, was the last vice

that

that would ever have become the inmate of his bosom, and he hesitated not immediately to offer the utmost assistance in his power to his unexpected visitants, though a feeling, not altogether the offspring of hospitality, to which, in outward expression, it bore strong resemblance, yet easily to be imagined, induced him to press his auditors, in terms eager even to anxiety, to accompany him at once to his own rooms.

Having thus succeeded in removing them "far from the madding crowd's ignoble strife," the first inquiry naturally was—what had procured him the pleasure of seeing them at Oxford? when he was astounded by the information that the representative of the Duddles was, forthwith, to be entered a gentleman-commoner of B—— College, which was the purpose of their journey; and his consternation was not a little increased by finding the reason which had made him so much the object of their last night's inquiries,

quiries, was the desire of profiting by his knowledge of the necessary forms, and his active co-operation in carrying them into execution.

This was an employment which, however gladly their young host would have dispensed with it, he did not hesitate immediately to undertake; and finding, on inquiry, that they had no particular bias in favour of any individual tutor (they being, in point of fact, unacquainted even with the name of either of them), he ventured to recommend Mr. Duddle's being immediately placed under the care of his own, Mr. Holloway's talents, mildness, and moderation, having firmly secured his esteem and personal regard.

After a considerable time spent in discussing the merits of some cold fowl and ham from the college kitchen, flanked by a double tankard, which occasioned her ladyship to observe—"That, at all events, the dear child did not seem likely to be stinted,"

stinted," Baldwin attended his visitors to the rooms of his tutor, and having explained his errand, was left to entertain her ladyship, while Mr. Holloway accompanied the uncle and nephew to take the necessary steps for the matriculation of the latter.

This primary business being happily dispatched, and the gentlemen returned, the new under-graduate and his friends were about to retire, on the suggestion of our hero, when lady Duddle exclaimed—"Stop! stop! before we goes, pray, Mr. Ollivy, can't I see the *missis* of the college, as I vant to beg her to be *petickler*, and see that master Duddle has his sheets vell *haired*, and a few other little things vitch I should like to mention; besides," added she, "I should like to speak to the maid just for a minute, about making his bed, that he may be sure and have it made high in the middle; for, poor dear! he never can sleep, unless his bed's made high in the

the middle, and I shan't mind giving her a few shillings to attend to him; for, thank God! we can afford it."

"Pack o' nonsense, Mary," cried uncle Barnaby; "speak to the maid, indeed! as if you didn't know there was no such things allowed at college. Do, pray, let's go about our business; John's now an Oxford scholar, and if he is not old enough to take care of himself now, he never will be."

"Poh! poh!" replied her ladyship, "how should you know indeed, Mr. Barnaby, about these things? hold bachelors like you, as never had hany children of their hown! How is the boy to be taken care of, I vonders, if one doesn't exert one's self, and see that every thing's proper?"

Mr. Holloway, who had witnessed this little altercation with mixed sensations of wonder and amusement, now interfered, and forcibly restraining a strong propensity to laugh, which threatened to discompose the economy of his visible muscles, assured

assured her ladyship, that she might depend upon every attention being paid to the comfort and convenience of Mr. Duddle, although the attendance of females was not considered altogether compatible with the regulations of the university; adding, that as his tutor, he should consider himself bound to see every thing rightly arranged; and that he had no doubt but his young friend, Mr. Baldwin, would take sufficient care to introduce him properly to his companions.

"That's very kind of you, Mr. Ollivy; and I'm sure I'm much obliged to you, and so ought John to be; but there's nothing like women in these matters; and I'm sure I think it's very odd you don't allow no such things at college: but I hope, John," continued she, "as you've nobody now to take care of you like, you be sure and mind to tie a *hankercher* round your neck venever the vind's *hesterly*, and don't sit in no drafts!—And pray, Mr. Ollivy," turning to the tutor, who

who struggled to preserve his gravity, "may I trouble you to be petickler about his chilblains, for he's very subject to chilblains, if he gets his feet vet in vinter; so vill you be so kind, sir, as to be sure and make him change his stockings and comb his head every Saturday with a small-toothed comb?"

"Any good offices of mine, madam," replied Holloway, smiling, "my new pupil may most undoubtedly command; and I trust that the attentions he will receive from me will be, at least, as beneficial to his future interests as those you condescend to point out."

"Thank'ee, sir; I am sure that's wery good of you; and you can't say no more," replied the lady, who now took her leave, and, with the rest of the party, again returned to the rooms of our hero, whose annoyance during the foregoing scene had been extreme, and who rejoiced most sincerely when, the following day, lady Duddle, having again committed her darling

ling to his especial care, which he did not fail to promise, ascended a postchaise, and bid adieu to Oxford, leaving the object of her maternal anxiety behind her, only half satisfied with his situation, and thinking it very odd that there should be no "missis to an Oxford College."

This more juvenile connexion being thus renewed, Baldwin certainly performed his promise to the utmost of his power, and succeeded in rubbing off a little of the rust contracted by his *éléve* at his mamma's apron string; he contrived to introduce him into the best society the college afforded—a circumstance which, though certainly facilitated by the report of his immense property, all his wealth would nevertheless have failed, independent of other aid, to produce, and which he frequently found insufficient to protect him from the ridicule his querulous effeminacy would sometimes draw upon him, or to shield him from the provoking bursts of risibility which were excited, about a month

month after his introduction, by the arrival of a large plum-cake, a present from his mamma, addressed to "Master John Duddle, Oxford College," which having, from the vague method in which it was directed, nearly made the tour of the university, was at length safely deposited in his rooms at B——, during the presence of a small party, whom, for the first time, he had taken courage to invite to wine, and who, in despite of the threatened vengeance of uncle Barnaby, with all the accumulated horrors of which he was at length goaded by their reiterated provocations, imprudently enough, to menace them, continued to cut so many jokes, and divert themselves so perseveringly at his expence, that poor John most bitterly, for the moment, regretted the fatal hour that consigned him to society so rude and disagreeable.

Under the tuition of our hero, however, to whom he adhered as his sole hope and protection, he, by degrees, got rid of many

of

of those habits, and much of that unfortunate manner, which rendered him at first so obnoxious to the practical wit of his tormentors. If, after his morning-walk before breakfast, he found, at his return, his door *sported*, the economy of his table disarranged, his eggs broken, and the yolks carefully mixed up with the contents of his tea-caddy, his kettle emptied, and refilled with fluids of a less savoury nature; or if, on retiring for the night, he discovered that some wicked wag had contrived so inextricably to interweave his sheets and blankets, as to deny the possibility of getting into bed, without a previous redisposition of the whole of the clothes, from mattress to counterpane, he was taught, at length, the folly of that useless lamentation and anger, which produced the very effects they bewailed, and learned rather to retaliate than complain. Notwithstanding his defects, he had many good points in his character; but there was one fault which Baldwin in vain used

his

his utmost endeavours to correct: John was, from his earliest years, most penuriously shabby and mean; and though the fondness of his mother always took care that his pockets should be sufficiently well lined, parting with his money was the thing, of all others, to which he had the greatest aversion.

During one of the vacations, he, by invitation, accompanied our hero to his guardian's, and was as much smitten, as it was possible for a young man of his disposition to be, with the charms of Miss Beresford, who, from a fine healthy-looking girl, had now emerged a very interesting and beautiful young woman, and Duddle's admiration was not, perhaps, the less excited by the large property to which her father had lately succeeded.

Mr. Beresford had, some time before, called on Charles, at Oxford, in his way to Ireland, to which country he had been summoned by the severe illness of a distant relation, of great wealth, but which

he

he had never entertained the remotest idea would ever centre in himself, or any of his family. Finding himself, however, on his deathbed, Mr. Lionel Beresford, of Ballygallaghan, dispatched a messenger to his cousin, whom he had never seen above twice in his life, requesting his immediate attendance, which was, of course, complied with without delay, as similar commands of rich relations generally are; and in about six weeks Mr. Beresford returned, in deep mourning, having consigned his old cousin "to the tomb of all the Capulets," and taken possession of a very handsome inheritance.

The first use he made of his new acquisition was to contract for the purchase of the Grange, a handsome building, in the centre of a romantic park, well supplied with wood and water, and commanding one of the most picturesque views in the county in which it was situate. A handsome gateway, flanked by two Gothic turrets, opened at one extremity of the

the grounds, upon the turnpike road, rather more than a mile from the entrance of the town of Appleton; while the house, considerably withdrawn from the highway, stood embosomed in a grove of high and tufted beech trees, which reared their venerable forms in sombre grandeur, and gave an air of imposing magnificence to what had much the appearance of an ancient baronial residence. The house itself, though possessing an air of great antiquity when viewed from without, was amply stored within with all those little comforts and conveniences which modern luxury and modern taste render now so indispensable in the habitation of an English gentleman. The high-backed chairs and antique furniture made way for the more elegant sofas and *chaises longues* of later times; and Baldwin, as well as his friend, in his occasional visits, drew in increasing draughts of love, while wandering over the apartments with the fair Mary, listening to, and of course approv-

ing, the various alterations her taste had dictated, and the many future improvements she had still in contemplation.

Twice, in these sojournments at his kind guardian's, had his friend Duddle accompanied him; Mr. Beresford had ever treated him more as a favourite son than as a ward, and always insisted on his bringing home with him as many and whatever friends he pleased. Indeed, the whole business of his guardian's life seemed to be the endeavour to anticipate his very wishes, and, coupled with the mournful tenderness with which he was in the habit of regarding him, did not fail to excite in Baldwin's bosom a corresponding and enthusiastic regard.

But amidst all the comforts and comparative splendour with which he was now surrounded, Charles could not help perceiving that his guardian was far from happy; that open and benevolent countenance, which had at first sight won his regard, was now generally clouded and contracted,

tracted, as if by some internal sensation; the mildness of its usual expression was frequently overwhelmed with a shade of melancholy, for which no apparent cause seemed to account; or, at other times, assumed the character of severe suffering, though, when questioned by his daughter or himself, as to the existence or nature of his ailment, a cheerfulness, evidently forced, for a few moments banished the appearance of depression from his features; or, sometimes, though very seldom, a petulant denial and immediate retreat at once precluded inquiry, though it could not satisfy the anxiety his manner and apparently-declining health combined to excite. One circumstance did not fail to strike upon our hero's observation; this was, that those little fits of ill-humour increased in frequency, and were now almost invariably addressed to his daughter, while to himself his manner became proportionably more kind and affectionate; this, which he could not at length but perceive

to be the case, began to give him great uneasiness; and the more so, as his attention being, in consequence, drawn to the observation of Mary's behaviour on these occasions, he plainly saw that she was no less hurt by her father's unkindness than himself, and that a strong effort was sometimes necessary for the purpose of restraining her feelings.

CHAP.

CHAPTER VIII.

Ερως ἀνίκατε μάχαν!
Σ' ὔτ' ἀθανάτων
Φύξιμος ὐδεὶς
Οὔθ' ἁμερίων ἐπ' ἀν-
-θρώπων· ὁ δ' ἔχων, μέμηνεν. SOPHOCLES.

Yet do not my folly reprove;
She was fair, and my passion begun;
She smil'd, and I could not but love;
She is faithless, and I am undone! SHENSTONE.

On the borders of a narrow lake, formed and supplied by the confluence of several small springs, which took their rise in the neighbouring hills, and after wandering in various directions through the park, united under the canopy of a number of majestic oaks and bending willows, which encircled the margin, stood a beautiful little pavilion, or summer-house, consist-

ing of only one apartment, the floor of which was composed of tesselated marble, and its sides supplied with sofas of light blue damask, corresponding to the curtains with which its windows were adorned. Its shape was octagon; the roof supported by simple Doric pillars of freestone, which gave an air of lightness to the edifice, and seemed, by the refreshing coolness of the whole appearance of the building, to invite the midday wanderer to shelter and repose. The windows, six in number, with the exception of one which opened on the water, were screened from the intrusive beams of the summer sun by thickets of laurels, lauristinus, and other shrubs, surmounted by the graceful laburnum, and intermingled clumps of fir and larch.

The entrance was approached by a flight of marble steps, of similar construction with the floor of the interior; and though the elevation on which it stood was but slight, yet, from the flatness of the ground in

in its immediate vicinity, the prospect, which in this part of the park, though beautiful, was very bounded, was seen from its portal to the utmost advantage.

This sweet little spot was the favourite retreat of Mary Beresford; genius and education had combined to render her feelingly alive to the beauties of Nature, and seldom has a greater variety of her charms been exhibited on so confined a scale. The green lawn in front of the pavilion was, as we have before observed, plain and level; but the rich verdure of the velvet turf which clothed it, and afforded pasturage to a small herd of fallow deer, which generally confined themselves to the spot, and had acquired the appellation of Miss Mary's herd, amply compensated for the want of variety in its surface.

The opposite bank of the lake rose almost imperceptibly from the margin of the water, till swelling into boldness, its summit was visible over the top of a clump

of willows, which decorated a small island in the foreground, while in the distance rose the majestic hills of E——, the dark foliage of whose ancient groves was finely contrasted by the brilliance of the glowing champagne extended at their feet, and formed a background to the picture, presenting a happy amalgamation of the separate beauties of a Salvator Rosa and a Claude Lorraine.

Here it was that with her workbox or easel, Mary would often retire on a summer's evening, leaving the gentlemen to the enjoyment of their bottle, and here, with all the ardour of youthful passion, Charles would hasten to seek her; while his guardian, involved in deep reverie, and Duddle, dozing from the soporific effects of a hearty dinner, in which he never failed to indulge, scarcely perceived, and never animadverted on the cause of his absence from the social board. Yet notwithstanding his intrusion on her privacy was never repulsed, but, on the contrary,

trary, always received with a smile of welcome, Charles perceived, or fancied he perceived, that his presence was rather endured than desired, and that the smile which never failed to greet him was rather the placid offspring of amenity, than the warm cordial emanation of reciprocal affection; and at times he almost feared that some more favoured being had already secured the tenderest regards of his beloved, which the mere cold indications of good-will, arising from the habitual familiarity of long-protracted intimacy, were alone the cause of that undeviating sweetness of manner with which his attentions were always received.

Yet whenever an idea of this sort, in spite of his more sanguine anticipations, would nevertheless forcibly intrude, in vain did he rack his imagination to form a probable conjecture as to the identity of his supposed rival. The once-dreaded and almost-hated Trevanion no longer, as formerly, hung upon her accents, or haunted

her footsteps; the kind reception, indeed, which the handsome curate had once never failed to meet with from his guardian, had long since been withdrawn; and though he still occasionally met the family at houses of mutual resort, or encountered them in the promiscuous concourse of a Sunday evening's promenade, the demeanour on both sides was ever cold, and the salutation distant and reserved; while, in regard to Jacky Duddle, the demon of jealousy himself, though he certainly must have discovered an attachment (which might properly, though perhaps somewhat vulgarly, be described as amounting almost to a sort of *sneaking kindness*) on the part of the gentleman, would at once have given all suspicion to the winds, when he beheld the open unembarrassed manner, not unmixed with a trifling degree of levity, of rather a satirical nature, with which the awkward smirking advances of the young citizen were invariably met.

All true lovers, however, have long been notorious

notorious for being up early and late; and if some of the numerous accounts we remember to have read in narratives similar to the present, are to be implicitly re-relied on, sleep seems to be a commodity of which a young gentleman or lady in that unfortunate predicament has no longer any need. Our hero was not so unfashionable as to linger in the arms of Morpheus longer than most of his fellow-subjects to the power of the blind god; and, as is usually the custom with the possessor of a mind not at peace with itself, seldom fails to wander early in the morning among those scenes which the fairy footsteps of his mistress were wont to consecrate later in the day. In one of these sentimental rambles, chance directed him towards the pavilion on the lake; and remembering that Mary had, the evening before, occupied one of the sofas, while listening to him as he recited some of the most pathetic passages from the "Pleasures of Hope," he slowly ascended the steps, meaning to

indulge himself with reclining for a few moments on the spot which had supported the elegant form of her who was the never-ceasing object of his thoughts.

On reaching the door, he was surprised to find it partly open, and hastily entering, perceived a small piece of paper, neatly folded, lying on the very place he had previously intended to occupy; as it bore no address or superscription, he hesitated not to unfold it, when the following lines, written in a man's hand, met his eye:—

She sigh'd when she bade me farewell,
And her eyelash was wet with a tear,
Yet that tear caus'd my bosom to swell,
And that sigh sounded sweet on my ear.

They were sweet, for they told me she lov'd,
That her bosom my absence would mourn;
Her tear my departure reprov'd,
And her sigh seem'd to bid me return.

Yet, oh! when she meets me to-night,
How dearer the joy I shall prove!
For her tear will be that of delight,
And her sigh but the throbbing of love.

Had

Had a spectre newly risen from the grave encountered his vision, Baldwin could not have stood more appalled than on the present occasion. The fatal paper remained clenched firmly in his hand, which betrayed not for a while the least trace of trembling.

There is something in the sudden and immediate approach of unexpected and overwhelming misery which at once benumbs all our faculties, paralyses every nerve, and sends the blood back in one cold ebbing tide, directly to the heart. This chilling sensation in an instant thrilled through every vein of the unhappy Charles, as he finished the perusal of the scroll which annihilated all his hopes. It is true that neither address or signature afforded confirmation to the instantaneous conviction which flashed like lightning on his mind, yet that conviction was not the less certain. A deep groan at length gave relief to his pent-up spirits, and hastily turning to quit the place which had witnessed

nessed the destruction of his happiness, and the accumulation of his despair, his glance, hurrying through the open door, rested on the agile form of Mary Beresford herself, who, with eager yet irresolute footsteps, was quickly passing over the dew-besprinkled path which traversed the lawn, and ended at the bottom of the steps leading to the summer-house.

Her cheeks, glowing from the united effects of health and exercise—her dark locks, which, escaping from the confinement of a small straw bonnet, wantoned in the morning breeze—the lightness of her step—the angelic beauty of her whole appearance, which, but a few moments before, would have raised our hero's soul to ecstacy, now stung him to the heart with all the bitterness of the most ineffable woe; he sprang down the steps, flew towards the astonished and trembling girl, whom he encountered at their feet, and pressing, in a hurried manner, the paper into her hand, gave her a look of agony,

and

and rushed into the obscurity of the neighbouring thickets.

The dinner-bell at the Gránge had long rung its accustomed peal, the covers were placed upon the table; but neither our hero, nor the youthful mistress of the mansion, had yet made their appearance. Mr. Beresford, who was always punctuality itself in regard to his meals, and never would dispense with it even in his guests, had fidgetted up and down the spacious dining-room, carrying his watch in his hand, for at least ten minutes, while Duddle, with a rueful countenance, was inwardly lamenting this unusual and unlooked-for delay in sitting down to his repast, and speculating on the probable cause which could produce so extraordinary an event, when the master of the family, turning short in his perambulation, strode towards the mantlepiece, and abruptly pulled the bell.—" James, let Miss Beresford know that dinner is cooling on the table, and request

quest Mr. Baldwin to favour us with his company."

James retired with a bow, but returning almost immediately, informed his impatient master that neither the one nor the other of the objects of his inquiry were to be found in their respective rooms, and it was moreover supposed that they were not within the walls of the mansion.

A strong hectic flushed the countenance of Beresford, and his voice faltered as he made the inquiry of when they were last seen, and whether they had taken their departure together? the reply to which was altogether unsatisfactory—Mr. Baldwin had not been seen since supper the preceding evening, after which he had retired to his room, and the appearance of his bed announced that he had occupied it during the night; at breakfast he had been missing, but this was an occurrence of such frequency, that it had ceased to occasion surprise or remark, the whole

household

household having long been acquainted with the custom he had used himself to, of taking early and long walks, the duration of which frequently prevented his meeting the assembled family at their first repast.

Miss Beresford had, as usual, presided at the breakfast-table, but quitted the room as soon as the cloth was removed, since which time neither herself nor her maid Betty had been seen by any one of the servants. On examining her room, several of the drawers were found open, and emptied of their contents; but nothing in the appearance of Charles's apartment indicated any thing extraordinary.

Mr. Beresford's agitation at this account was extreme, and he left the room in the eager hope of making some further discoveries, while Duddle, excessively shocked, sat down to dine by himself; and such an impression did the confusion into which the family was thrown make upon his mind, that his appetite was sensibly affected,

fected, and after merely helping himself twice to mock-turtle, three times to salmon and lobster sauce, two slices from a fillet of veal, with a proportionate quantity of ham, and the half of a boiled chicken, he sent away his plate, totally unable, from the depressed state of his spirits, to taste more of the sweets and pastry which constituted the remove, than a few baked custards, to give a relish to a small piece of apple-pye.

Meanwhile Mr. Beresford, with hasty strides, was traversing every corner of the park, and making its echoes ring with the name of her who had abandoned him. He found at last, upon inquiry at the porter's lodge, that Mary and her maid, unaccompanied by any one, the latter carrying a bundle of considerable dimensions, had passed through the gate about two o'clock, without mentioning the quarter to which they were about to direct their course—a circumstance not uncommon, as she was in the habit of visiting many of the

the poor cottagers in the neighbourhood, and supplying them with clothing and other necessaries from the stores of the Grange.

One thing, which caused no suspicion at the time, was now mentioned to Mr. Beresford; an empty postchaise had drawn up at least two hours previously to the time at which she had been seen under the park paling, and afterwards proceeded slowly down a green lane, which formed one of the external boundaries of the domain. On this intimation, Beresford returned somewhat more composed to the house; his air indeed had latterly been more that of a man puzzled than exasperated; but his features again underwent a most alarming revolution, when he was informed that long after the period in which his daughter had passed the gates, Baldwin had been descried by one of the under-gardeners in a remote part of the park, stretched on the ground, and seemingly operated upon by some strong emotion, and

and that on the approach of the person who had discovered him, he had hastily risen, and quitted the spot with every mark of disturbance and disorder. This account, which tended to dissipate the idea he had entertained of the fugitives being in the company of each other, was shortly confirmed by the appearance of Baldwin himself, who, with a melancholy and dejected air, was seen coming towards the house from one of the many avenues which led to it.

The now almost-distracted father, darting from the viranda in which he perceived his approach, ran, with steps feeble and tottering from mental agitation, over the grass, and, with hurried accents, exclaimed—" Where is she?—What have you done with her?—Where is Mary?"

The unaffected astonishment, mingled with the deepest grief, which was portrayed in the countenance of him whom he addressed, made an answer superfluous, and the unhappy father, all his worst fears confirmed,

confirmed, fell senseless into the arms of a servant who had followed him.

With the greatest care and attention Baldwin saw him conveyed to the house, and instantly dispatching a groom to summon Mr. Jordan, remained by the side of the couch which contained the apparently-inanimate form of his benefactor; while, from the account of the servants in attendance, he gathered enough to convince him of the nature of the calamity which had befallen him. His surprise, though considerable, was not the predominant feeling of his mind on the discovery of Mary's elopement; but deep internal anguish wrung every fibre of his frame as he listened to the story of her abrupt departure; no tear wet his cheek at this cruel destruction of all his fondest hopes and wishes, nor did the deep and unnaturally-hollow tone, which his voice assumed, once falter, as he desired that the surgeon, who was now arrived, might be shewn into the room. • • •

A considerable

A considerable quantity of blood was taken from the arm of Mr. Beresford, and almost immediate relief was the consequence. Suspended animation was restored, and the wretched father again awoke to a full sense of his misery. The first impulse of his returning recollection was to order horses to be immediately brought round, that he might pursue the fugitive, though, from her having had now nearly nine hours start, an idea of overtaking her was scarcely to be entertained, even had the precise route she had taken been discovered. This circumstance was for a while ineffectually urged to the distracted parent, whose irritated feelings were wrought to agony by opposition, and whose expressions grew alarming in the highest degree, and made the bystanders tremble for the sanity of his intellects. He raved for his daughter in the most incoherent terms, now imprecating the bitterest curses on her head, and declaring that she had utterly destroyed not only all his chance

of

of comfort in this world, but even his hopes of pardon in the next; the next moment imploring her, in the most pathetic terms, to return, and save him from destruction.

Exhausted nature at length sank under the conflict, and the attention of all was now turned to our hero, who, having seen Mr. Beresford conveyed to his chamber, where he had fallen, by the violence of his exertions, into a disturbed slumber, now declared his intention of proceeding personally in search of the runaway; and in this design he was resolute, notwithstanding a glassy film now covered that bloodshot eye, which had so lately beamed with intelligence and good-humour, while his sunk and hollow cheek, in which not the faintest tinge of the ruddy glow that used to animate it now remained, fully evinced how small a period of time is necessary to produce the most important changes in a human being, when Adversity lays her heavy hand upon his brow.

In spite of the remonstrances of Mr. Jordan,

Jordan, who would fain have persuaded him to follow the example of his patient and go to bed, he persisted in his intention, and without even staying to awake the sympathizing Duddle, who had lost for a moment all sense of sorrow in a sound nap, which had surprised him on a sudden in an armchair, he threw himself upon his horse, and galloped off on the London road. He was induced to take this direction by the report of the servant, who had returned from Appleton with the surgeon, and who had picked up news in the town, that a lady, much resembling Miss Beresford, had been seen to pass through that place in the morning in a postchaise, accompanied by a female and the curate, Mr. Trevanion.

Undeterred by the heavy and incessant rain which now fell in torrents, and of the presence of which he was scarcely conscious, he urged the poor panting animal, which bore him to the top of his speed, till wet, weary, and harassed both in mind

and

and body, he arrived at the metropolis in the middle of a dark tempestuous night. Hastening to an hotel in Jermyn-street, which, during his periodical visits to the university, he had always made his temporary abode for the short time which he delayed in London, he gave his tired horse to the ostler, whom he at the same time began to question eagerly as to the arrival of the persons he was in search of. No tidings, however, could be obtained from this source, either of them or of the post-chaise which had conveyed them, and feeling that the attempt to prosecute his inquiries, at so late an hour, and in such a night, must be entirely fruitless, he consented to retire to a chamber till daybreak, where he endeavoured to recall his scattered thoughts, and fix on some plans for his proceedings on the morrow.

His first idea was to apply at the police-office in Bow-street; but to this he was exceedingly averse, on account of the publicity such a step must necessarily occasion;

 besides,

besides, he could not help reflecting that he had no power to compel Miss Beresford, even should he succeed in discovering her, to quit the protection she had chosen. As she had been of age some months, not even her father, were he present, could force her to return; and therefore his only resource was, by the statement he might make of her parent's situation, to endeavour to prevail on her to remeasure her steps—a hope inspired by the recollection of the strong filial attachment she had ever appeared to feel, and which he intended to tax to the uttermost.

Is it but justice to state, that no thought of a selfish nature found in these distressing moments an entrance in his bosom. He felt that hope was now dead in him; that all his gay, smiling visions of the future were blighted in the bud; and that to him, under any circumstances, this world must henceforth be a blank. One feeling alone attached him to existence, the earnest desire of restoring the lost sheep to his venerable

nerable and afflicted friend, of hearing him pronounce a pardon on her ingratitude, and bestow his benediction on her and the husband of her choice. Were this once happily accomplished, the choking sensation which rose in his throat, and oppressed him almost to suffocation, would, he thought, be relieved, and his throbbing breast be still for ever;' and this forgiveness of her rashness, and sanction to her union, he determined, if possible, to obtain, though his own heart might burst in the effort.

Day after day, with eager footsteps and disordered mien, did he traverse in vain the environs of the metropolis. He did indeed discover the postboy who had brought them into town, and who, in answer to his inquiries, backed by a weighty bribe, informed him, that on their arrival at the first stand of hackney-coaches, one had been summoned from the rank, and the baggage, which consisted only of a bundle and a large portmanteau, being shifted, they had quitted his vehicle for

the other; the direction given to the coachman, whose number he did not recollect, and whose person he did not think he should be able to remember, had met his ear so faintly, that nothing could be distinctly understood; he thought, however, that the word "Pentonville" was uttered, but could not say what part of that populous suburb was mentioned, or indeed be certain as to the identity of the name.

On this intelligence, meagre as it was, did Baldwin, after promising his informant a handsome reward, should he succeed in discovering the hackney-coachman, fly to Pentonville; but in vain did he traverse every street, lane, and alley—in vain did he inquire at every little chandler's shop and pothouse in the neighbourhood, as to the arrival of any new lodgers in their immediate vicinity; all his interrogations were universally answered in the negative, or if, for an instant, he began to fancy he had obtained something like a clue to the place of their retreat, the next moment some

point

point of description, totally inapplicable to, and irreconcilable with, the objects of his search, convinced him at once of the fallacy of the idea, and hurled him back again into the lowest depths of despondency.

On the eleventh morning after his departure from the Grange, as, after a restless and agitated night, he was proceeding to traverse, for the hundredth time, streets where he began to despair of meeting with the fair absentee, hastily turning the quarter of Fitzroy-square, he ran against a gentleman, whom, on stopping to apologize for his unintentional rudeness, he perceived to be Mr. John Duddle, whom he had left in an easy-chair at the Grange, in which "himself he unfatigued with gentle slumbers." The recognition was as mutual as instantaneous.

"Ah, my dear Baldwin! have I at last been so fortunate as to find you, after hunting in vain half over London for you? Why, man, how dismally thin you're grown! you look as if you had not tasted

a mouthful since those famous custards we used to get at Beresford's: by-the-bye, I must certainly write down to his cook for the receipt; for, notwithstanding all I can say or do, Le Blanc at home cannot make custards any thing equal to them, and I have done nothing but worry my mother, ever since my return, to make him go down to Appleton to learn the proper method; for, do you know——"

"Nonsense, Duddle—never mind the custards. How long have you been here? How did you leave my dear Mr. Beresford? Has he yet received any intelligence of——" Charles's voice faltered, and refused to pronounce the name.

"Oh dear! yes—I have a great deal to tell you; nay, for the matter of that, I should have told you long ago, if I could have found you; but when I called at your hotel, you were never within, and the waiter always said——"

"My dear Duddle, do pray, without circumlocution, answer my question. Has Mr.

Mr. Beresford recovered from the shock? Has any account arrived to set his mind at ease?"

"Why, as to setting his mind at ease, I can't say; indeed, I thought, when I came away, he seemed quieter than he had been; but I dare say he tells you all about what you wish to know in the letter he gave me for you."

"A letter? quick—let me have it directly!"

"Why, bless my soul! how impatient you are! don't be in such a hurry, and pray don't pinch so hard!" for Charles, in his eagerness, had grasped him somewhat roughly by the arm. "Let me get out my pocketbook, and see if I have got it there."

The pocketbook was produced, and examined with a degree of deliberation, that bore hard on our hero's stock of patience, till he began to fear that what his provoking friend said, he apprehended might indeed be the case, viz. "that he had left the

letter at home in his other coat," was really true; but fortunately his temper was not destined to be so severely tried, and the epistle was at last discovered in an hitherto-unexamined corner, and put into his hands, Duddle requesting that " if Mr. Beresford should happen to say any thing in it about the custards, the recipe for which he had asked him for before he came away, that he would be good enough to read that part of the letter aloud."

Baldwin, who scarcely heard his request, hurried into the nearest coffeehouse, with a degree of speed particularly inconvenient to his friend, whose little squat figure and short legs made it very difficult for him to keep up with his more agile companion; throwing himself into a box, Charles broke the seal, and read the contents.

The letter, which was evidently written with a trembling hand, was scarcely legible. It commenced by styling him " my dear son," and proceeded to inform him, that as such he must hereafter permit him

to

to consider him, unless he wished to aid the efforts of his daughter in weighing him down to the grave; mentioning that he had received a letter from the latter, now Mrs. Trevanion, excusing her conduct on the plea of affection, and his known aversion to the match, which, from the frequent and positive manner in which he expressed his decided prohibition, she had long entertained no hopes of overcoming by any other method than the one she had been driven to adopt; imploring his forgiveness for the only act of disobedience of which she had ever been guilty, and with which her happiness was so intimately connected; adding her earnest hopes that her husband and herself might be permitted to offer him those attentions, which it would constitute their greatest pleasure to pay him, and which would, she had no doubt, materially assist in eradicating any unfortunate dislike he might have taken to Trevanion, whose character, person, and situation in life, he had admitted, were

 perfectly

perfectly unexceptionable; and finishing by a pathetic appeal to his parental feelings, and an earnest entreaty that they might be allowed to throw themselves at his feet.

To this, he said, his reply had been short and concise, stating, that as she had thought proper to forget that he was her father, he could no longer remember that she was his child; that, although he admitted every thing that she had said in favour of Mr. Trevanion, yet she ought to have been convinced, that he must have reasons against the match, although, perhaps, it was improper or impossible for him to assign them, and that they could have been of no light weight to induce him to thwart an only and dearly-loved child in so material a point; he therefore informed her, to save any further useless solicitation on the subject, that he had discarded her from his heart for ever; enclosing a copy of a will he had just executed, in which he

constituted

constituted his adopted son, Charles Baldwin, whose merits she had so much undervalued, sole heir to all his property of every description whatsoever. Mr. Beresford concluded by requesting Charles to return to the Grange as soon as possible, and assist in banishing from his recollection that such persons as Trevanion and his wife were in existence.

There was an air of coolness and decision in his account of the letter sent to his daughter, much at variance with the hurried and agitated state of the rest of this epistle, at which Baldwin was staggered and appalled. He had hitherto imagined, that, could he but succeed in discovering Mary's retreat, but little argument would be necessary to induce her and the object of her choice (for that she was married he had not entertained a doubt) to accompany him back to her paternal roof, and still less to procure her pardon from a father who had doted on her, and which he had

felt assured would have been accorded as soon as asked.

Of the will he thought nothing, determined as he was to accept nothing to the injury of Mary, or any one dear to her; and he now endeavoured to discover from his friend Duddle (who, finding himself overlooked, was consoling himself with the contents of a huge basin of soup) whether the young couple were still in London, and where was the place of their residence? and heard, in reply, that they had been living in ready-furnished lodgings in Panton-street, from which place their letter to Mr. Beresford was dated; and that, though he could not possibly say, he thought it most likely they might be there still.

This was a fact our hero was very desirous of ascertaining; and Duddle volunteering his attendance, much to Baldwin's annoyance, who found it impossible to shake him off, they proceeded to Panton-street, the unfortunate similarity of the

name

name of which, to that of a very different quarter of the town, had undoubtedly deceived the postboy, and misled himself.

Scarce had they entered the street, when the figure of Mary, at the window of a first floor, produced a sudden revulsion in the blood of our hero, and he now felt all the difficulty of the task he had undertaken. In a few moments he was again to be in the presence of her, to whom he might have said, in the language of the bard of Erin—

> "With thee were the earliest dreams of my love,
> Every wish of my bosom was thine!"

He was again to meet the glance of that eye, whose slightest wandering he had watched—again to hear the melting tones of that voice of harmony, to whose soft accents he had listened with the rapture of enthusiasm! but he was to behold that fair form the unalienable property of another—he was to meet that eye, beaming indeed with affection, but not for him—

and

and hear perhaps that tongue employed in the utterance of endearments, in which, for him even to admit a wish to share, was now become a crime.

He hesitated; and twice did his unnerved hand relinquish the knocker he had seized, without a sound, when Duddle, who had formed no conception of what was passing in the mind of his friend, supposing the circumstance to proceed from the stiffness of the rapper, which had been newly painted, grasped the handle of a bell attached to one corner of the area rails, and in an instant produced a peal which sounded through the house, and brought a maid-servant to the door.

Our hero had, by this time, summoned up resolution enough to inquire if Mr. and Mrs. Trevanion were within? he was answered in the affirmative, and giving his name to the servant, followed her up stairs to the drawing-room above.

Mary was alone, pacing the room with pensive steps, when the forlorn and wasted

ed figure of Baldwin caught her eye; she uttered a feeble cry, and turned deadly pale, as, extending her hands, she ran forward to meet him, whom she fondly anticipated might be the messenger of remission from the father who had renounced her. A single glance, however, at his disconsolate countenance, was sufficient to convince her that the half-formed hope was unfounded, and the cheerless, yet still affectionate air with which he took her hand, and led her to a seat, while it too plainly shewed the desolation of his mind, proved that regard yet rose paramount over disappointment.

For a few moments he contemplated her in silence; the convulsive sensation in his throat, which had of late so much affected him, absolutely prohibiting the power of utterance; as he gazed on her, he fancied that she too had lost much of that graceful roundness of figure, which had so much distinguished her when they had last met; her look was serious even to depression,

pression, and the hand of care had already traced no illegible characters on her fair brow. An idea rose in his mind, that perhaps she might already have begun to repent the precipitate abandonment of her home. A single tear, the first he had shed since their last fatal interview in the pavilion, trembled on his eyelash, as he endeavoured to express the satisfaction he felt at once more meeting her, after so long and fruitless a search.

The first inquiries of Mary, whose embarrassment wac not inferior to his own, were many and urgent, as to the state in which he had left her father, and whether there were any hopes of his yet relenting in her favour? but when she discovered, from our hero's answers, that he had left the Grange in pursuit of her so immediately after her elopement, and that he had only that morning been made acquainted with her having addressed Mr. Beresford, her grief became extreme, and strong hysterical sobbings convulsed her whole frame.

When

When their mutual self-possession was a little restored, and they were able to converse more calmly on the events which had taken place, she proceeded to inform him, that the graces and attentions of Trevanion had succeeded in gaining her warmest love, long before she was even acquainted with the meaning of the word; and that, when she found the attachment was reciprocal, she at once gave way to an innocent passion, which she saw no reason for endeavouring to check, towards one whom her father had always held in the highest esteem, and to whose alliance she never conceived that he would have raised any obstacle; that all at once she had perceived the most decided coolness in his manner towards her lover, and he had at length questioned her on the subject of his addresses, to which she gave the most unreserved replies, when, to her surprise and dismay, he not only peremptorily forbad her encouraging his pretensions, to which he stated, in general terms, there

there were the most insuperable objections, but even commanded her, on pain of being thrown from his heart for ever, to make a transfer of her affections in favour of another, for whom, although she justly appreciated his merits, she could only feel the tenderest regard, as a brother and a friend.

Mary paused; the deep hectic which flushed the hollow cheek of her auditor, the faint gleam which for a moment animated his dim eye, and the tremulous pressure of the hand which she had suffered him to retain, told her she was understood.

After some little hesitation, she proceeded with her narrative, and stated, that on Trevanion's next visit to the Grange, Mr. Beresford had ordered him to be shewn into his own study, where he, without circumlocution, acquainted him with the conversation he had so lately held with his daughter, and the absolute impossibility of his ever being prevailed upon to consent

consent to their marriage; and requiring his promise, that he would no longer think of Mary in the character of a suitor, added—"On these terms, Mr. Trevanion, we may still continue friends, as believe me when I assure you, that no want of esteem for you, whose worth no one can feel higher respect for than myself, but imperious circumstances, over which, alas! I have no control, make it absolutely necessary to my peace of mind, that Mary Beresford should become the wife of another."

This pledge, however, the indignant Trevanion absolutely refused to give, and a cessation of his visits was the consequence; while Mary, by her father's desire, kept herself much more retired than formerly; though she still continued to meet her lover privately, who strongly represented to her what he called the tyrannical conduct of her father, and used all his rhetoric to prevail on her to consent to a clandestine union, urging the certainty of

her

her obtaining forgiveness of the offence, from his affection, when the matter was once beyond recall.

To this measure, however, she was particularly averse; and though she hesitated not to give her lover the most solemn assurances he could desire, that no power should compel her to give her hand to another, yet she declared her resolution, at the same time, not to take the rash step he recommended, but to trust to time and circumstances to alter her father's present determination, well knowing the difficulty, not to say impossibility, of his ultimately refusing her any request on which the whole of her future happiness depended.

Trevanion, although his hopes were not so sanguine, was compelled to acquiesce for the time, but he never ceased renewing his importunities, and as time flew on, and no relaxation appeared to have taken place in her father's determination, they began to make some impression, and weaken her resistance to his entreaties, more especially

especially as he had secured a most able auxiliary in her maid Martha, who had been brought up with her young mistress from a child, and possessed no little influence with her.

Poor Charles, all this time, spent his vacations at the Grange, and, happy in her company, was totally unconscious of the latent storm which threatened all his fond visions with utter annihilation. For him she truly felt the most sincere sisterly affection, and more than once entertained the idea of admitting him into her confidence, and engaging his interest with her father to allow her to pursue the bent of her inclinations.

Happy, perhaps, had it been for all parties, if her half-formed design had been carried into execution; but from this she was as constantly deterred by the fear lest the ardent affection she could not help seeing he entertained for her, should operate to her disadvantage, especially if he should come to know how firm a supporter his

love

love would meet with in her father; and the agitation he evinced on discovering the verses which Trevanion had imprudently left in the pavilion, their usual rendezvous, and whither she was then going, in the expectation of meeting him, made her dread the impossibility of any longer concealing the secret of her still-continued intimacy with the object of his prohibition from her father's knowledge.

Trevanion, who, hid in the underwood, which, in some places, extended to the edge of the lake, had seen our hero enter the summer-house he had himself but just quitted, and afterwards, being induced to remain concealed, by the knowledge of his vicinity, had witnessed his abrupt presentation of the paper, immediately on his departure made his appearance, and again more vehemently urged her instant flight, as the sole means now remaining of avoiding immediate detection.

This idea, and the dread of her father's anger, at length prevailed, and she reluctantly

tantly consented that he should depart, in order to procure a chaise, while, with a palpitating heart, she returned to the mansion, to prepare some little necessaries for her journey, and to secure the attendance of Patty; not without a secret dread of encountering Baldwin, in spite of her having seen him take a path which led through a winding labyrinth of shrubs to a remote part of the domain.

Fortunately for the execution of her project, he did not appear, and she constrained herself with difficulty to preside at the breakfast-table, where her confusion and mistakes passed unregarded by Mr. Beresford, who, wrapt in mental aberration, did not even observe the trepidation so evident in her manner. The meal concluded, she quitted the house, as before related, and, joining Trevanion in the green lane, proceeded immediately on their journey, and had nearly reached the metropolis before she was missed, or her departure so much as suspected.

On

On their arrival in town she was placed in the lodgings they now occupied, under the care of the mistress of the house, who had once been housekeeper in the family of Trevanion's father, and whom he did not hesitate to admit to his confidence; while he himself took up his residence for a few days at an obscure hotel in the neighbourhood; and having found no difficulty in procuring a licence, as Miss Beresford had been some months of age, they were united at the parish church of St. Martin's in the Fields.

Immediately after the conclusion of the ceremony, she had dispatched a letter to her father, the contents of which, as well as the unpropitious nature of the answer returned, our readers are already apprised of, and which did not fail to communicate the bitterest distress to herself, as well as disappointment to her husband, on whom she could not help observing a very unpleasant effect was produced by the per-

usal

usal of the enclosed testament, in spite of all his efforts to conceal it.

Of this, however, in her communication to Baldwin, she did not breathe a hint; and he was just assuring her of the impossibility of his availing himself of any disposition of Mr. Beresford's to her prejudice, when the voice of Trevanion, loud and angry, and seemingly in altercation with Duddle, who, at Charles's earnest request, had consented to remain, for a short time, in the parlour below, sounded from the staircase.

In the next moment they entered the room together, the former, with a raised voice and inflamed countenance, addressing himself impetuously to Charles, who rose at his entrance—"Pray, Mr. Baldwin, to what am I indebted for the honour of this visit?"

"To a sincere and earnest desire on my part, Mr. Trevanion, of lending every assistance in my power towards restoring tranquillity to Mrs. Trevanion and your-

 self,

self, and healing the unhappy breach which now exists to interrupt it."

"Mean canting hypocrite!" cried the incensed Trevanion; "and do you then, after first basely acting the part of a spy, and then taking advantage of the partiality of an angry old man, in the ebullition of his rage to defraud his children, dare you then face the victims of your treachery, and come to insult those whom you have contrived to ruin?"

"Hear me, Trevanion! were I the despicable wretch you describe, I should not indeed dare to meet the upbraiding eye of the injured without shrinking from its glance; but, bold in my conscious innocence of the vile charge you have fastened upon me, I tell you, you mistake me! Here is one," added he, turning to Mrs. Trevanion, who sat too much alarmed to interfere, "who does more justice to my motives, and knows me incapable of the conduct you impeach me of. By Heaven! I knew not till this very morning of the circumstance

circumstance to which you allude, and which you cannot lament more than I do myself."

"Oh, doubtless," replied the other, whose original dislike of Baldwin, from his well-known attachment to Mary, was now increased to hatred by his imagined share in procuring her disinheritance, "doubtless your grief at the event must be extreme! doubtless your impertinent intrusion into my family, when you had ascertained my absence, was to express your concern and sorrow to Mrs. Trevanion, and your despair at being obliged to console yourself for the loss of her person by the appropriation of her property."

"Trevanion, you wrong me!" cried Baldwin, forcibly smothering his indignation, "and when this heat is over, you will believe me when I assure you——"

"Never, vile fawning sycophant! Begone, and rid us of your odious presence, while the contempt I hold you in yet protects you!"

 "Never

"Never will I leave you, Trevanion, till I have compelled you to acknowledge the falsehood and injustice of your suspicions! never till——"

"You will not? thus then—" and before his terrified wife, or the amazed and astounded Duddle could perceive or impede his purpose, he sprang forward, and implanted a violent blow on the face of Baldwin, who, reeling from its force, was for an instant staggered, then springing forward, seized his athletic but less agile antagonist with a lion's grasp.

A shriek from Mary, who sunk fainting on the sofa, relaxed his hold; his tall stature seemed to dilate into sublimity, as, quitting his grasp, he exclaimed—"'Tis well! you have traduced my character, and disgraced my person, dishonoured me by a blow; deep is the offence, deep and bitter be my revenge! when next we meet, my triumph shall be complete!"

He turned upon his heel, and left the house.

Duddle,

Duddle, who was in vain endeavouring to collect his scattered faculties, so far as to comprehend the meaning of what had passed before his eyes, followed him, with unequal footsteps, till, turning a distant corner, he was entirely lost to his view.

END OF VOL. I.

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